

Professional identity of final-year trainee teachers in Ghanaian colleges of education

¹Kassim File Dangor*, ²Edward Bonnituo Kankpog

¹Department of Education Studies, Tumu College of Education, Ghana

²Department of Educational Foundations, University for Development Studies, Ghana

***Corresponding Author**

Email: filekassim@gmail.com

Received:
5 June 2026

Revised:
21 July 2026

Accepted:
31 July 2026

Published:
23 August 2026

How to cite (APA 7th style): Dangor, K. F., & Kankpog, E. B. (2026). Professional identity of final-year trainee teachers in Ghanaian colleges of education. *Indonesian Journal of Education and Pedagogy*, 3(2), 239-250. <https://doi.org/10.61251/ijoeep.v3i2.427>

Abstract

The National Teacher Education Curriculum Framework (NTECF) of Ghana seeks to nurture positive teacher identity among trainee teachers. However, since its inception in 2018, it appears studies have not evaluated this benchmark. Therefore, this study sought to assess the professional identity of final-year trainee teachers in Ghanaian colleges of education. Using a convenience sample of 1,560 final-year trainee teachers recruited via WhatsApp, the study investigated the perceived professional identity of trainees by collecting data using a Likert scale questionnaire. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics and t-test. Findings of the study show that respondents perceived themselves to have a high professional teacher identity ($M = 4.33$, $SD = 0.46$). Also, the study found a statistically significant difference in the professional self-efficacy of trainee teachers in favour of males $t(1558) = 2.97$, $p = 0.003$. However, there was no statistically significant differences in trainee teachers perceived professional knowledge, and professional commitment based on sex. The study concluded that final year trainee teachers in colleges of education perceive themselves to possess a high professional teacher identity which aligns with the expectations of the standards set for training of teachers where trainees are expected to demonstrate positive teacher identity.

Keywords: Pre-service teachers; professional identity; teacher education; teachers standards

INTRODUCTION

Teacher professional identity emerged as an area of scholarly interest in the 1990s (Beijaard et al., 2004; Zhang & Wang, 2022). It is a concept that is viewed from varied perspectives. Some scholars view it as a teacher's self-image whereas others perceive it to be the roles discharged by a teacher in his career (Ayinselya, 2020; Casanova-Fernández et al., 2022; Lamote & Engels, 2010). This suggests that teacher professional identity encompasses their perceived-self and how they view themselves in terms of how well they can discharge their professional mandate. This perceived self is a dynamic process which evolves as the teacher encounters different experiences overtime (Beka & Gjela, 2025; Huang & Wang, 2024; Widari & Jazadi, 2025). This is true for student teachers as well, as they pursue their training programmes (Opoku, 2023). This transformation in one's image



is relevant to prepare them to assume professional roles in a fast pace era characterised by complexity ([Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009](#)).

The professional identity of a teacher is constructed based on a number of factors. These are situational, personal, professional, pedagogical and contextual factors ([Abroampa et al., 2025](#); [Awuah, 2025](#)). The personal factors that shape identity include, gender, beliefs, values, age, self-image, among others. Also, subject matter knowledge, technological skills, and pedagogical knowledge make up the professional attributes of the teacher. Macro level factors such as educational policies, and school environment constitute the contextual factors that shape teacher professional identity. Beyond these, there are other variables that shape the professional identity formation of a teacher. On their part, [Ampadu et al. \(2021\)](#) indicated that teacher professional identity is shaped by their teaching philosophy. To [Beka and Gjelaj \(2025\)](#), teacher professional identity is influenced by variables such as their self-efficacy, job satisfaction, self-image, professional development, perception of one's role, and the future perspective of the profession. This explains why [Anku \(2024\)](#) identified teacher professional identity as a multi-dimensional concept. Meaning that it is a composite of different attributes produced by many variables.

A number of studies have interrogated the influences of teacher professional identity on other competences. These empirical studies have demonstrated that teacher professional identity plays a key role in their professional competence, subject matter mastery, and professional knowledge ([Burn, 2007](#); [Feser & Haak, 2023](#); [Rushton et al., 2023](#)). These studies implied that the performance of a teacher in these essential domains is shaped by their professional identity. It has direct impact on their endurance, productivity, and commitment as well ([Brooks, 2016](#); [Cheng, 2008](#)). [Yu et al. \(2025\)](#) also established that teacher professional identity significantly correlates with their perceived organizational support, engagement, and ego resilience as it helps them to handle stress. According to [Ncube and Ajani \(2025\)](#), the construct is related to teacher pedagogical practices, confidence, and motivation. It is therefore, an area of major concern in educational research, and an important variable that shapes how teachers appreciate methods, curriculum provisions, among others ([Zeng & Liu, 2024](#)). Overall, teacher professional identity has become a predictor of their teaching efficiency ([Ncube & Ajani, 2025](#)).

Studies have also examined the role of teacher professional identity in teacher preparation. Fritz cited in [Ayinselya \(2020\)](#) stressed the importance of teacher professional identity in educational development by stating that no educational intervention will yield the desired results unless teacher identity is given attention. Trainee teachers designated identities have consequences on how they deliver in their actual professional practice ([Meyer et al., 2023](#)). [Beauchamp and Thomas \(2009\)](#) identified teacher education to be the starting point to instill teacher identity partly because it helps novice teachers to transition into the profession properly ([Casanova-Fernández et al., 2022](#)). Experts continue to show that teacher training is one means of developing professional teacher identity ([Zhang et al. cited in Zeng & Liu, 2024](#)) particularly during teaching practice ([Bansale et al., 2026](#); [Opoku et al., 2024](#); [Kurniadi et al., 2025](#)). Pre-service teachers' interaction with course content and their teaching practice experiences are designed to support the development of positive teacher identity ([Hill, 2022](#)). In effect, [Álamo and Llorent \(2024\)](#) argued for teacher education programmes to ensure identity development in their training.

In Ghana, the need for professional teacher identity is clearly espoused by the [Ministry of Education \(M.o.E\) \(2017\)](#) which highlighted it as a key indicator for both in-

service and pre-service teachers under the domain of Professional Values and Attitudes. Particularly, trainee teachers are expected to develop positive teacher identity during their period of training. Various interventions such as mentorship, development of teaching philosophies, and continuous professional development are incorporated into the NTECF to assist trainees develop positive identity which will position them as role models in the community. [Steenekamp et al. \(2018\)](#) support the role of mentorship in the development of professional identity among pre-service teachers. Likewise, [Alzhrani \(2023\)](#) gave evidence to support how continuous professional development enhances pre-service teachers' professional identity.

Regrettably, [Opoku \(2023\)](#) ascertained that professional identity development of pre-service teachers in Ghana is being embraced and pursued amidst challenges. One of these challenges is the concern raised by the [National Teaching Council \(NTC\) \(2025\)](#) regarding a consistent decline in the professional knowledge of trainee teachers. This raises concerns about the professional identity of these pre-service teachers as well. [Atai and Khazaei \(2014\)](#) claim that professional knowledge and professional identity are interrelated variables ([Atai & Khazaei, 2014](#)). Yet, studies on teacher professional identity have not been given prominence ([Ayinselya, 2020](#)). [Rushton et al. \(2023\)](#) draw attention to the dearth of scholarly investigations on the phenomenon in the global south. In Ghana, [Anku \(2024\)](#) noted a gap in exploring teacher identity. Pre-service teacher professional identity is an evolving intricate ([Ogundapo et al., 2025](#)) and slippery ([Thomas & Mockler, 2018](#)) phenomenon that demands urgent attention. Investigating pre-service teachers identify is timely because it is a way of informing teacher educators about relevant areas of concern in teacher training ([Irani et al., 2020](#)). This is necessary to bring about better reforms in teacher education programmes ([Avraamidou, 2014; Zhang & Wang, 2022](#)). Since the introduction of the Bachelor of Education programmes in colleges of education in Ghana, studies have not examined the levels of trainee teachers' professional identity.

Purpose of the Study

This study seeks to investigate the prevailing professional identity of final-year trainee teachers in colleges of education in Ghana, as well as interrogate differences in their professional identity. Specifically, the study seeks to find out the level of final-year trainee teachers' professional identity, and also find out if there is any statistically significant difference in final year trainee teachers' professional identity based on sex.

Theoretical Framework

This study conceptualises trainee teachers' professional identity based on three dimensions offered by [Zeng and Liu \(2024\)](#). These are, professional self-efficacy, professional knowledge and professional commitment. Professional self-efficacy involves a trainee's confidence or personal judgement of his competences in relation to achieving learning goals in the profession (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy cited in [Lamote & Engels, 2010](#)). According to [Marcia \(1980\)](#), self-confidence or self-efficacy is any favourable attitude a person exercises towards a given career which provides justification for a vocational decision. Professional commitment also has to do with a trainee teacher's psychological connection to the profession (Van Hizen cited in [Lamote & Engels, 2010](#)). Lastly, professional knowledge refers to trainee teachers' competences in pedagogical, content, and curricular knowledge. This includes their understanding of key educational policies and knowledge of learning theories. These areas are identified as key domains in the NTECF of Ghana. They are also outlined in the National Teachers Standards of Ghana as key indicators of competences which teachers must meet before they are licensed to teach.

METHODS

Research design

The research design for this study is the quantitative descriptive design. The descriptive design allows researchers to describe conditions as they naturally occur through quantitative or qualitative data collection ([Amedahe & Gyimah, 2013](#)). It for instance, allows the use of questionnaire to collect data on perceptions, opinions, and attitudes for the purposes of statistical analysis. Descriptive research allows for the description of these conditions without manipulating the variables.

Specifically, the study relied on the cross-sectional design to compare the differences in the professional identity of trainee teachers in terms of their sex. Generally, cross-sectional studies yield 'snapshot' of prevailing characteristics of a population at a specified time ([Cohen et al., 2007](#)). This makes it possible to examine the differences in characteristics of the population on a given attribute.

Respondents

Participants of the study comprised final-year trainee teachers who were pursuing Bachelor of Education programmes in colleges of education in Ghana during the 2025/2026 academic year. Participants for the study were sampled using convenient sampling. A google link containing questionnaire items was shared on official WhatsApp platforms for Teacher Trainees Association of Ghana (TTAG). The study complied with ethical issues such as consent, anonymity, and confidentiality. Instruction was given indicating that the study was targeting only continuing students in colleges of education in Ghana. Participation in the study was voluntary. A total of 1,560 trainee teachers took part in the study out of a target population of 14,400 representing a response rate of 10.83%. This sample size is acceptable based on [Krejcie and Morgan \(1970\)](#) sample size determination framework. Out of this number, 706 (45.26%) were males whilst 854 (54.74%) were females. Also, 333 of the participants were pursuing Early Grade Education, 450 pursuing Primary Education, and 777 pursuing Junior High Education as presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Sex Distribution Across Programmes of Study

Count		Sex		
		Male	Female	Total
Programme	Early Grade	83	250	333
	Primary	196	254	450
	Junior High	427	350	777
Total		706	854	1560

Instrument

The study relied on a five-point Likert scale questionnaire adapted from [Zeng and Liu \(2024\)](#) for data collection. The original instrument has a total of 13 items with a reliability of 0.939. All the 13 items were adapted where respondents were required to choose a response for each item on a scale of 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree which reflected their professional identity. The instrument was categorised into three dimensions namely; Professional Self-Efficacy, Professional Knowledge, and Professional Commitment. The Cronbach Alpha scale of the dimensions of the instrument was found to be as follows;

Professional Self-Efficacy: 0.785, Professional Knowledge: 0.726 and Professional Commitment: 0.781. The overall reliability of the instrument is given as 0.886. These are deemed to be good for research purposes. The minimum score for each of the dimensions is 1.00 whilst the maximum score for each dimension is 5.00.

Data analysis

Data collected through the Google form questionnaire were imported into SPSS (version 27) for analysis. The data were analysed guided by objectives of the study. Means and standard deviations were used to analyse the levels of trainee teachers' professional identity. The levels were done according three ranges; 1.00–2.49 = low professional identity, 2.50–3.49 = moderate professional identity, and 3.50–5.00 = high professional identity. Also, the statistical differences in trainee teachers' professional identity based on sex was analysed using t-test. For each of the three dimensions, mean of means of their respective items were computed to arrive at the professional identity scores for the three dimensions. Also, the overall professional identity score was obtained by computing the mean of means for all the 13 adapted items in the scale.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Research Question: What is the level of final-year trainee teachers' professional identity?

This section sought to evaluate the professional teacher identity of trainee teachers. Means and standard deviations were obtained for each dimension of trainee teachers' professional identity, as well as that of their overall teacher professional identity. These are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for Dimensions of Trainee Teachers' Professional Identity

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Professional Self-Efficacy	1560	4.45	.50
Professional Knowledge	1560	4.18	.55
Professional Commitment	1560	4.31	.55
Teacher Professional Identity	1560	4.33	.46
Valid N (listwise)	1560		

*** Interpretive Range Labels:

1.00–2.49 = low professional identity

2.50–3.49 = moderate professional identity

3.50–5.00 = high professional identity

From Table 2, the results show that trainee teachers who took part in the study reported high professional identity for each of the three dimensions namely, Professional Self-Efficacy (M = 4.45, SD = 0.50), Professional Knowledge (M = 4.18, SD = 0.55), and Professional Commitment (M = 4.31, SD = 0.55). The overall Teacher Professional Identity was also reported as high (M = 4.33, SD = 0.46). The lowest mean recorded by participants

was in their Professional Knowledge. That notwithstanding, the results suggest that participants perceive themselves to have high professional teacher identity in all the dimensions.

Research Hypothesis: There is no statistically significant difference in final-year trainee teachers' professional identity based on sex.

This section explored the statistical differences in trainee teachers' professional identity between males and females. This was done by using t-test. The results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Independent Samples Test for Differences in Trainee Teachers' Professional Identity Based on Sex

Dimension	Male		Female		<i>T</i>	<i>P</i>	Cohen's <i>d</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			
Professional Self-Efficacy	4.50	.478	4.42	.507	2.974	.003	.494
Professional Knowledge	4.21	.530	4.16	.572	1.610	.108	.554
Professional Commitment	4.33	.549	4.29	.545	1.110	.267	.547

The results in Table 3 show that there is a statistically significant difference in trainee teachers professional identity in terms of professional self-efficacy between males ($M = 4.50$, $SD = 0.478$) and females ($M = 4.42$, $SD = 0.507$), $t(1558) = 2.97$, $p = 0.003$. The decision in terms of professional self-efficacy is to reject the null hypothesis. On the other hand, the results show that there is no statistically significant difference in trainee teachers' professional knowledge for male ($M = 4.21$, $SD = 0.530$) and female ($M = 4.16$, $SD = 0.572$), $t(1558) = 1.61$, $p = 0.108$. Lastly, there is no statistically significant difference in trainee teachers' professional commitment for male ($M = 4.33$, $SD = 0.549$) and female ($M = 4.29$, $SD = 0.545$), $t(1558) = 1.11$, $p = 0.267$. The decision is to fail to reject the null hypotheses in respect of both trainee teachers' professional knowledge and professional commitment.

In terms of practical significance, the Cohen's *d* for the three dimensions were found as follows: Professional self-efficacy = 0.494; professional knowledge = 0.554; and professional commitment = 0.547. The Cohen's *d* values are moderate for each of the dimensions. This suggests that there was no significant practical significance.

Discussion

The study shows that respondents reported a high professional identity for all the three dimensions of trainee teachers' professional identity. This shows that the respondents indicated desirable professional identity for each of the dimensions. This study agrees with the findings of [Hong et al. \(2018\)](#) who reported that majority of participants in their study showed commitment for instance. The study however, contests the claim made by [Nyamekye and Zengulaaru \(2025\)](#) that teacher professional identity is declining making the profession least considered due to negative reputation in Ghana.

[Marcia \(1980\)](#) submitted that individuals who show strong identity are said to be at the achievement status or foreclosure status. This is often attributed to high career

exploration or pressure from parents and guardians. The high level of professional commitment reported by participants in this study may indicate that many participants have developed a positive sense of professional identity. Also, the high professional identity reported by trainee teachers could be explained by the fact that in-service teachers in Ghana have also reported high professional identity in previous studies such as [Akanzire \(2019\)](#). In-service teachers who serve as role models to trainee teachers could exercise influence on their mentees' professional identity.

In terms of sex differences in the professional identity of trainee teachers, the study found no statistically significant differences in pre-service teachers' professional knowledge and professional commitment based on sex. A similar account was given by [Dalgic \(2014\)](#) and [Lestari \(2025\)](#) that sex has no major effect on the levels of teachers' commitment. On the other hand, the study contests the findings of [Rubio-Valdivia et al. \(2024\)](#) who found a significant difference in pre-service teachers' academic commitment in favour of females. Cross-cultural differences could account for these conflicting findings. However, the study found that male trainee teachers reported higher professional self-efficacy ahead of female trainee teachers. This key finding is in contrast with [Qin and Liu \(2023\)](#) who reported that female teachers had higher levels of perceived professional identity compared to males in China.

Hitherto, low professional self-esteem of male teachers was partly attributed to perceived gender stereotype confronting male elementary school teachers. This contention finds context in the believe that world over, male elementary school teachers are criticised for choosing teaching which is perceived as a feminine profession. This kind of traditional conception or misconception affects the sense of professional identity of male teachers ([McDowell, 2023](#)). [Gao et al. \(2025\)](#) as well as [Qin and Xiao \(2026\)](#) affirm societal bias against male early childhood teachers particularly. Similar findings were reported in Ghana where male early childhood teachers reported encountering stereotypes which affect their professional identity ([Abrompa et al., 2025](#); [Boadu & Asiama, 2026](#)).

The findings of this study present a new perspective which opposes the traditionally held socially constructed narrative of perceiving elementary school teaching as a feminine profession where males are reported to be facing stereotypes consequently leading to low professional identity among male teachers. The first pillar of the [National Teacher Education Curriculum Framework \(NTECF\) \(M.o.E, 2017\)](#) recognises these misconceptions associated with programme specialism, which is a key barrier it seeks to address. Therefore, findings of this study where there is a variance in trainees' professional self-efficacy in favour of males suggest that the NTECF is making positive strides in addressing these misconceptions. Although societal stereotypes may partly explain these findings, the present study did not directly investigate these factors.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that final-year-trainee teachers in colleges of education perceive themselves to possess high professional identity in all dimensions, however with lowest perceptions in their professional knowledge among the dimensions. This implies that the initial teacher education curriculum is meeting the stated expectations in terms of fostering positive teacher identity in trainee teachers in colleges of education. The study also concluded that male and female trainees reported variations in their professional self-efficacy in favour of males. It is important to highlight that this finding

probably gives indication that the NTECF is making positive strides in addressing misconceptions associated with teaching where primary and kindergarten teaching is misconceived as a feminine profession. Colleges of education should consider attaching trainee teachers pursuing Early Grade and Primary Education programmes to partner schools where mentors demonstrate positive professional identity for them to observe during their Supported Teaching in Schools (STS) to further boost their professional identity. In conclusion, this preliminary study has offered some evaluative evidence in terms of the professional teacher identity of final-year trainee teachers in Ghanaian colleges of education which is a key indicator outlined by the National Teaching Council of Ghana. This gives insight to stakeholders on how trainee teachers perceive themselves with regards to their professional identity.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION

Author 1: Conceptualisation, methodology, software, data curation, writing—original draft preparation, and editing; **Author 2:** Conceptualisation, supervision, and reviewing.

REFERENCES

- Abroampa, W., K., Gyang, N. O., Amadiok, D., & Nyatsikor, M. K. (2025). In their own voices: Ghanaian male kindergarten teachers' experiences and their professional identity construction. *International Journal of Psychology and Education*, 6(1), 1-23. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15078955>
- Akanzire, B. N. (2019). *Early childhood teachers' professional identity in Mfantseman Municipality in the Central Region of Ghana* [Master's thesis, University of Education, Winneba].
- Álamo, M., & Llorent, V. J. (2024). Identity formation of pre-service teachers. relations with training and attitudes toward cultural diversity. *International Journal of Educational Psychology*, 13(3), 184-198. <http://dx.doi.org/10.17583/ijep.12542>
- Alzhrani, N. (2023). Liberating an EFL teacher as an activist teacher professional identity in MA TESOL classrooms. *Asian-Pacific Journal of Second and Foreign Language Education*, 8(5), 1-19. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40862-022-00172-3>
- Amedahe, F. K., & Gyimah, E. A. (2013). *Introduction to educational research*. University of Cape Coast
- Ampadu, E., Butakor, P. K., Amponsah, S., & Yeboah R. (2021). Exploring the professional identities of pre-service teachers' studying at the University of Ghana. *Int. J. Education Economics and Development*, 12(1), 27-41. <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJEED.2021.111655>
- Anku, J. (2024). Language teacher identity in a non-native context: The case of teachers of English Language in Ghana. *Linguistics, Literature and English Teaching Journal*, 14(1), 1-28. <https://doi.org/10.18592/let.v14i1.12374>
- Atai, M. R., & Khazaei, M. (2014). Exploring Iranian EAP teachers' pedagogical content knowledge and their professional identity. *Issues in Language Teaching*, 12(2), 1-24. https://journals.atu.ac.ir/article_1367.html
- Avraamidou, L. (2014). Studying science teacher identity: Current insights and future research directions. *Studies in Science Education*, 50(2), 145-179. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057267.2014.937171>
- Awuah, G. (2025). *Teacher autonomy and professional identity: A comparative study of teachers in Finland and Ghana* [Unpublished Master's thesis, Åbo Akademi University].

- Ayinselya, R., A. (2020). Teachers' sense of professional identity in Ghana: listening to selected teachers in rural Northern Ghana. *PRACTICE*, 2(2), 110-127. <https://doi.org/10.1080/25783858.2020.1831736>
- Bansale, J. C., & Caluza, L. J. B. (2026). Sentiment analysis of pre-service teachers' issues and concerns during internship. *Indonesian Journal of Education and Pedagogy*, 3(1), 11-27. <https://doi.org/10.61251/ijoep.v3i1.312>
- Beauchamp, C. & Thomas, L. (2009). Understanding teacher identity: An overview of issues in the literature and implications for teacher education. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 39(2), 175-189. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057640902902252>
- Beijaard, D., Meijer, P. C., & Verloop, N. (2004). Reconsidering research on teachers' professional identity. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 20(2), 107-128. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2003.07.001>
- Beka, A., & Gjelij, M. (2025). Understanding early childhood teachers' identity – examining the relationship between identity constructs and key variables. *Educational Process: International Journal*, 15, e2025166. <https://doi.org/10.22521/edupij.2025.15.166>
- Boadu, P. K., & Asiam, A. A. (2026). "Early childhood education or nothing": Motivations and experience of a male teacher in female-dominated early childhood education: A case study in Ghana. *Early Childhood*, 54, 2049-2060. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-025-01983-y>
- Brooks, C. (2016). *Teacher subject identity and professional practice: Teaching with a professional compass*. Routledge
- Burn, K. (2007). Professional knowledge and identity in a contested discipline: Challenges for student teachers and teacher educators. *Oxford Review of Education*, 33(4), 445-467. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03054980701450886>
- Casanova-Fernández, M., Joo-Nagata, J., Dobbs-Díaz, E., Mardones-Nichi, T. (2022). Construction of Teacher Professional Identity through Initial Training. *Educ. Sci.*, 12, 1-14. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci12110822>
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2007). *Research methods in education* (6th ed.). Taylor and Francis
- Dalgic, G. (2014). A meta-analysis: Exploring the effects of gender on organisational commitment of teachers. *Issues in Educational Research*, 24(2), 133-151. <https://search.informit.org/doi/10.3316/informit.850940347559682>
- Feser, M. S. & Haak, I. (2023). Key features of teacher identity: A systematic meta-review study with special focus on teachers of science or science-related subjects. *Studies in Science Education*, 59(2), 287-320. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057267.2022.2108644>
- Gao, C., Khalid, S., Gilnar, O., & Tadesse, E. (2025). I don't think there is a place for me: unfolding male preservice teachers' professional identity development in a Chinese university. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal*, e-ISSN: 2040-7157. <https://www.emerald.com/insight/2040-7149.htm>
- Gohier, C., Chevrier, J., & Anadón, M. (2007). Future teachers' identity: Between an idealistic vision and a realistic view. *McGill Journal of Education*, 42(1), 141-156. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ768628>
- Hill, S. L. (2022). Authoring professional identity: Pre-service teachers and ways of knowing. *McGill Journal of Education*, 57(2), 160-180. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1106313ar>
- Hoi Yan Cheung (2008) Measuring the professional identity of Hong Kong in-service teachers. *Journal of In-service Education*, 34(3), 375-390. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13674580802003060>
-

-
- Hong, J., Greene, B., Roberson, R., Francis, D. C., & Keenan, L. R. (2018). Variations in pre-service teachers' career exploration and commitment to teaching. *Teacher Development*, 22(3), 408-426. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13664530.2017.1358661>
- Huang, X., & Wang, C. (2024). Pre-service teachers' professional identity transformation: A positioning theory perspective. *Professional Development in Education*, 50(1), 174-191. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19415257.2021.1942143>
- Irani, F. H., Chalak, A., & Tabrizi, H. H. (2020). Assessing pre-service teachers' professional identity construction in a three-phase teacher education program in Iran. *Asian-Pacific Journal of Second and Foreign Language Education*, 5(19), 1-21. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40862-020-00100-3>
- Joseph Ezale Cobbinah & Micheal Yamoah (29 Oct 2025): University students' perceptions about male students in early childhood education and care in West Africa: The case of Ghana. *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education*, 1-17. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10901027.2025.2582171>
- Krejcie, R. V., & Morgan, D. W. (1970). Determining sample size for research activities. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 30, 607-610.
- Kurniadi, N., Artanti, Y., & Rahmat. (2025). Pre-servive teachers' professional identity: A case study of sociocultural perspective in Indonesian EFL context. *International Conference on Research in Education and Science*, 274-292, Antalya. ISTES
- Lamote, C., & Engels, N. (2010). The development of student teachers' professional identity. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 33(1), 3-18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02619760903457735>
- Lestari, I. W. (2025). Identity statuses and gender in pre-service EFL teachers' professional identity development. *Proceedings of Forum for University Scholars in Interdisciplinary Opportunities and Networking*, 2(1), 28-37. <https://conference.ut.ac.id/>
- Lia, O. (2024). *Orientation as part of teacher education – the interplay of career choice motivation and professional identity development, their links with goal orientations and effects of an orientation practicum* [Doctoral thesis, Heidelberg University].
- Marcia, J. E. (1980). Identity in adolescence. In J. Adeison (Ed.), *Handbook of adolescent psychology*. (pp. 109-137), Wiley and Sons.
- McDowell, J. (2023). 'If you're a male primary teacher, there's a big "why are you doing that? What is wrong with you?"' Gendered expectations of male primary teachers: The 'double bind'. *Sociology Compass*, 17, 1-19. <https://doi.org/10.1111/soc4.13145>
- Meyer D, Doll J and Kaiser G (2023) Professional identity of pre-service teachers: actual and designated identity profiles and their relationship to teacher education programs. *Front. Educ.* 8, 1-11. <https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2023.1134848>
- Ministry of Education. (2017). *The national teacher education curriculum framework: The essential elements of initial teacher education*. Republic of Ghana
- National Teaching Council. (2025). *Chief examiners' report on 2025 GTLE 2*. Republic of Ghana
- Ncube, G., & Ajani, O. A. (2025). Investigating the influence of teacher professional identity on the pedagogical approaches to number concept instruction in the Foundation Phase. *Cogent Education*, 12(1), 1-15. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2025.2574330>
- Nyamekye, E., & Zengulaaru, J. (2025) 'Who wants to be a teacher in Ghana?' A structural equation modelling analysis of prospective language teachers' behavioural intentions to pursue a career in teaching. *PLoS One* 20(5), 1-16 <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0323131>
- Ogundapo, T.J., Lane, K., & Akerson, V. (2025). Exploring the science teacher identity of elementary pre-service teachers in a science method course: A mixed methods study. *International Journal*
-

- hr/>
- of Research in Education and Science (IJRES)*, 11(2), 247-263. <https://doi.org/10.46328/ijres.1296>
- Opoku, E. (2023). Pre-service teachers' perceptions of identity formation in Ghana. *African Journal of Empirical Research*, 4(2), 1082-1090. <https://doi.org/10.51867/ajernet.4.2>
- Opoku, E., Sang, G., Dzirasah, C., & Adams, F. (2024). Understanding pre-service teachers' identity formation during practicum: A survey study in Ghana. *Africa Education Review*, 20(5), 1-17. <https://doi.org/10.1080/18146627.2024.2367425>
- Qin, W., & Xiao, Y. (2026). Empowering male kindergarten teachers: Strategies for embracing identity and overcoming early career challenges. *Curr Psychol*, 45(108). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-025-08780-1>
- Qin, X., & Liu, S. (2023). The relationship between principal support, teacher professional identity, and teacher professional learning in China: Investigating gender differences. *Psychology in the Schools*, 60, 4871-4884. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.23066>
- Rubio-Valdivia, J. M., Granero-Gallegos, A., Carrasco-Poyatos, M., & López-García, G. D. (2024). The Mediating role of teacher efficacy between academic self-concept and teacher identity among pre-service physical education teachers: is there a gender difference? *Behavioral Sciences*, 14(11), 1053. <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs14111053>
- Rushton, E. A. C., Smith, E. R., Steadman, S., & Towers, E. (2023). Understanding teacher identity in teachers' professional lives: A systematic review of the literature. *Review of Education*, 11, 1-52. <https://doi.org/10.1002/rev3.3417>
- Steenekamp, K., & van der Merwe, M., & Mehmedova, A. S. (2018). Enabling the development of student teacher professional identity through vicarious learning during an educational excursion. *South African Journal of Education*, 38(1), 1-8. <https://doi.org/10.15700/saje.v38n1a1407>
- Thomas, M. A. M., & Mockler, N. (2018). Alternative routes to teacher professional identity: Exploring the conflated sub-identities of Teach For America corps members. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 26(6), 1-25. <http://dx.doi.org/10.14507/epaa.26.3015>
- Widari, I. G. A., & Jazadi, I. (2025). Narrating teacher identity across generations in rural Indonesia: Intersections of professional, moral, and digital resilience. *Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pembelajaran*, 6(2), 1237-1250. <https://doi.org/10.62775/edukasia.v6i2.1756>
- Yu, X., Xiong, Z., Li, W., Zhang, H., Li, X. & Xiao, W. (2025). Teacher professional identity on work engagement: the moderating roles of ego-resilience and perceived organizational support. *Front. Psychol.* 16, 1-6. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2025.1657911>
- Yunus, F. W., Malik, M., & Zakaria, A. (2012). A study on the identity status of future English teachers. *Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 35, 146-153. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2012.02.073>
- Zeng, J., & Liu, W. (2024) The development and validation of the teacher professional identity scale in a Chinese university context. *PLoS ONE* 19(3), 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0293156>
- Zhang, Y., & Wang, P. (2022). twenty years' development of teacher identity research: a bibliometric analysis. *Front. Psychol.* 12, 1-16. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.783913>
-

Conflict of Interest Statement: The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

Copyright © 2026 Author(s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License \(CC BY\)](#). The use, distribution or reproduction in other forums is permitted, provided the original author(s) and the copyright owner(s) are credited and that the original publication in this journal is cited, in accordance with accepted academic practice. No use, distribution or reproduction is permitted which does not comply with these terms.