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A COMPETENCY-BASED APPROACH TO THE PREPARATION OF HEAD OF THE PRESCHOOL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION IN CHINA

This article examines the policy, position, and development of managerial competence of the head of preschool institutions for the last 41 years of China's reform. The experience is summarized and the existing problems are analysed. In the course of the system analysis, the emphasis is placed on shaping the development of requirements for the modern preschool institution head as an individual, a carrier of innovative processes, a psychologist, a leader and laying his leadership competence through improving education system management based on world educational technologies. We have determined that the definition of "competency" in a single typology does not exist within the framework of the educational process. It is determined that a competency-based approach is an integrated approach, the elements of which are the definition of goals, selection of content, organization of the educational process, choice of educational technologies, evaluation of results.

Key words: kindergarten principal, competency, policies and regulations, professional standards, principal responsibility system

Introduction and problem statement. Since China began to implement the reform and opening-up policy in 1978, China's preschool education has made great progress, and the state has paid more and more attention to the construction of the kindergarten principal team. Different scholars have studied the competency of kindergarten principals from different perspectives. Lei [1, p. 54] proposed the competency model of principal in public kindergartens through behavioural event interview method. He [2, p. 103] introduced the competency theory into the research of kindergarten principal and made an overall analysis of the position of kindergarten principal. Qin et al. [3, p. 113] conducted an empirical study on the competency level of kindergarten principals through a questionnaire survey, interview and 360-degree feedback evaluation method. Based on this, this paper looks back at the development process of preschool education policies and focuses on the requirements of policies and regulations on the competence of kindergarten principals, and looks forward to the future policy development direction of preschool education by combing and analysing the previous relevant policies.

Analysis of recent research and publications. In the past 41 years, especially since the State Council of China promulgated the «Several Opinions on Current Development of Preschool Education» in 2010, schol-

ars' research on pre-school education mainly focus on the following aspects. Jiang [4, p. 3] sorted out the policy changes in 30 years through literature review and comparative research, and presented that the development of preschool education policy includes the reconstruction and standardization stage (1978-1996), the reform and development stage (1997-2003), and rectification and improvement stage (2004-2008). Based on the characteristics of the rule of law in China and the internal laws of the evolution of pre-school education policies and regulations, Zhang [5, p. 54] divided the evolution of the pre-school education policies and regulations into three stages: the formation period (1978-1989), the development period (1990-2009), and the perfecting period (2010-2018). Xu [6, p. 37] used a bibliographic co-occurrence analysis system and SPSS.20 software to conduct the quantitative analysis and qualitative analysis of 1499 articles from 2010 to 2017, and the results show that the research hotspots of pre-school education mainly focus on three dimensions and six directions. It is further concluded that the existing policy research on kindergarten leaders focuses on the interpretation of «Professional Standards for Kindergarten Principals» (PSKP) after 2015. In the level of policy analysis, Liu [7, p. 6] interpreted the PSKP from the change of the role of kindergarten principals. Wu [8, p. 123] com-

pared the standards for kindergarten principals in China and Canada with the literature method and argued that there are commonalities in the framework and content of the standards. On the practical level, Wang and Jiao [9, p. 35-36] proposed the construction of the principal training course based on the PSKP. Wang [10, p. 33] conducted a comparative study on the training methods of kindergarten principals based on the PSKP. Through a questionnaire survey, Hong, et al. [11, p. 82] concluded that the competency of rural principals needs to be improved.

Through the analysis of the previous literature, it is found that the existing research mainly focuses on the level of management practice and the summary of the overall policies and regulations. There is little research on the policies of kindergarten head's competency, and less research on the development process and systematic analysis of relevant policies, which is exactly the novelty of this article.

The purpose of this work is to systematically analyse the requirements of China's kindergarten heads' competency stipulated by the policies and regulations in the past 41 years since the Chinese reform and opening-up by using the literature method and sort out the policy development process by comparing the policies. By summarizing the experience and analysing the existing problems of the policies and regulations, the improvement strategies are put forward to provide references for the follow-up research in China and other developing countries.

Research results. Pre-school education is the weakest link in China's education system. In recent years, while pre-school teachers have been widely concerned by scholars, kindergarten leaders have gradually entered the field of vision of researchers. Also, the relevant policy documents on the requirements of kindergarten heads' competency have been gradually improved. In this paper, the classification method proposed by Zhang Li-Hong is adopted and the development of policies and regulations related to the competency of kindergarten heads can be divided into the following three stages:

The formation period of China's kindergarten policies and regulations is from 1979 to 1989. In the formation period, the working authority of the kindergarten leaders is clarified, and the requirements of competency are not refined.

From July to August 1979, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, and other departments jointly held a national conference to address the problems that the number of kindergartens is small and the quality of care and education is low. The meeting recommended that the State Council set up a leading group for pre-school education, which opened the prelude to standardizing the development of pre-school education. In November 1979, the Regulations on Urban Kindergarten Work (Trial Draft) issued by the Ministry of Education was the first pre-school education regulations promulgated after the Chinese reform and opening up. The regulation is divided into six chapters, including general provisions, healthcare and physical exercise, games and homework, ideological and moral education, educators, caregivers and other staff, organization, establishment and equipment, a total of

30 items [12, p. 58]. Among them, it is clearly stipulated that kindergartens are pre-school education institutions for children aged three to six. In item 30 of this regulation, it stipulates that the kindergarten leaders are responsible for leading the whole park under the leadership of the higher party committee and the education administrative department. The principal duties of the leaders are to implement the party's educational policies, implement the instructions and resolutions of the higher party committees and educational administration departments, go deep into practice, organize and lead the kindergarten's education and research work, comprehensively care about the children's life. Also, the leaders should organize and lead the political and cultural business study of teaching staff, care about their life and health, manage the gardens, equipment and funds, and regularly summarize the work of the whole park. Besides, regular meetings or staff meetings should be held to study the main work of the kindergarten. It can be seen that since the promulgation and implementation of this regulation, the responsibility system for the Chinese urban kindergarten leaders has been clarified. Although the provision of implementing the principal responsibility system does not cover the larger number of rural kindergartens in China, the rural kindergartens still implement the principal responsibility system in practice. In this regulation, there is no clear distinction between the requirements of the leaders' competency, and the main focus is on the leaders' administration of general affairs and finance.

In October 1981, the Ministry of Education promulgated the Kindergarten Education Program (Trial Draft). The draft aims to improve the quality of pre-school education, mainly referring to the educational content and requirements of kindergartens. In terms of the management of kindergartens, it is required to prevent the elementary and adult education of kindergartens, and actively strive for social and family support and other contents. The draft mainly focuses on the level of curriculum management, and the kindergarten heads' competency is not specifically described.

The general office of the State Council of China forwarded the Opinions on Strengthening Early Childhood Education in August 1988. It pointed out that the task of kindergarten education is to implement the principle of combining education with protection. The comprehensive development of physical, intellectual, moral, and aesthetic education should be carried out for children, so as to make them develop in harmony physically and mentally, prepare for entering primary school, and lay a good foundation for training a new generation. This document clarifies the overall evaluation criteria for the management of kindergarten leaders. This is the fundamental purpose of kindergarten education reform and the fundamental criterion for testing and evaluating kindergarten work.

To sum up, the policy documents on kindergartens are mostly issued in the form of a draft at this stage. It covers a wide range, including kindergarten education and teaching standards. Meanwhile, it clarifies the absolute leadership position of the kindergarten leaders in kindergartens and summarizes their work authority. The content focuses

on general affairs management and financial management and does not pay much attention to the competency of the kindergarten leaders. The detailed requirements of kindergarten leaders' competency were not discussed.

The development period of the kindergarten policy is from 1990 to 2009. The administrative management of kindergartens is concerned but the leaders' professional status is not fully reflected during this period.

In order to strengthen the management of kindergartens and promote the development of early childhood education, the Ministry of Education of China promulgated the Regulations on the Administration of Kindergartens in September 1989, which came into effect on February 1, 1990. The Regulation is the first pre-school education administrative law issued by the State Council since the founding of China. It includes six chapters, including general provisions, basic conditions, and approval procedures for the establishment of kindergartens, nursery and education work, administrative affairs of kindergartens, awards and punishments, and supplementary provisions. In item 23 of Chapter 4, it is proposed that the kindergarten heads are responsible for the work of the kindergartens. The leaders of the kindergarten should be appointed by the unit or individual holding the kindergarten and register with the registration authority of the kindergarten for the record. Kindergarten teachers, physicians, health workers, childcare workers, and other staff members are appointed by the kindergarten heads or by the unit or individual holding the kindergarten. The management authority of the kindergarten head is clearly put forward and it is proposed that the kindergarten can collect the childcare fee and education fee from the parents of the child according to the charging standards set by the government of the province, autonomous region, and municipality. In the regulations, the financial management responsibilities of the kindergarten leaders were reemphasized.

In June 1989, the National Board of Education issued the Working Regulations for Kindergartens (Trial). After six years of trials, the Kindergarten Work Regulations was officially promulgated in March 1996. The item 35 of the regulations stipulates that the kindergarten leaders should have a diploma of a kindergarten normal school (including a vocational school specializing in early childhood education) or obtain a kindergarten teacher professional qualification certificate. In addition, they should have some organization and competency and practical work experience. The kindergarten leaders are responsible for the overall work of the kindergarten, including organizing and guiding parents. It is emphasized again that the principal should hold regular garden affairs meetings to strengthen democratic management and supervision. Kindergartens should establish systems such as contact with primary schools [13, p. 98]. The promulgation of this regulation plays an important role in strengthening scientific management within the kindergarten and improving the quality of protection and education. However, the requirements for kindergarten leaders are more focused on their management experience, and lower requirements for their academic qualifications and management theory.

In order to promote the quality education in kindergartens and improve the quality of kindergarten education in an all-round way, the Ministry of Education issued the Guidelines for the Guidance of Kindergarten Education (Trial) in 2001. The outline mainly divided kindergarten education into five fields: language, art, society, health, and science. The objectives, contents and requirements, and guiding points of the five fields are proposed. This is a guiding document that instructs kindergarten teachers to transform the educational thoughts and ideas in the kindergarten work rules into educational behaviours. Compared with the original pilot draft, it has more specific guidance, mainly focusing on the guidance level of kindergarten educational activities. It does not explicitly mention the competency of kindergarten principals but includes that kindergarten leaders and teachers should guide educational activities.

In March 2003, the general office of the State Council forwarded the Guiding Opinions on the Reform and Development of Early Childhood Education. This document depicts the goals of China's early childhood education reform and development in the early 21st century. In terms of management, kindergartens are required to establish mechanisms to promote the continuous improvement of teachers' professional level. This document provides guidance to the education management of kindergartens at the macro level.

In general, this stage still attaches importance to kindergarten education and teaching activities and is more specific and detailed. For the management of kindergartens, in addition to general affairs and financial management, special attention is paid to the management of kindergarten teachers. There are preliminary provisions on the entry criteria for kindergarten leaders and the status of the head of the kindergarten is firmly established. However, the regulations on the competency of kindergarten leaders lack operable standards and do not fully reflect the professional level of the development of kindergarten leaders.

The perfecting period for kindergarten policies and regulations is from 2010 to now. During this period, the professionalism of the kindergarten heads is emphasized and their competency is further clarified.

In July 2010, the National Medium and Long Term Education Reform and Development Plan (2010-2020) were officially promulgated. In order to implement the spirit of this plan, the State Council issued Several Opinions on Current Development of Preschool Education in November 2010. The opinions mainly provide for the deployment of teacher management, fee management, and access management in kindergartens. As the general program for the development of pre-school education in the new era, the opinions opened the prelude to the high and intensive introduction of China's pre-school education policies and regulations.

In November 2012, the Ministry of Education, the Central Organization, the Ministry of Finance, and the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security jointly issued the Opinions on Strengthening the Construction of Kindergarten Teachers, which specifically proposed the

establishment of a qualification system for kindergarten leaders. The professional standard and qualification standard for kindergarten principals are formulated to improve their professional level. The promulgation of the regulation indicates that the relevant departments have begun to pay attention to the professional level of the principal, and set about developing relevant standards.

For promoting the professional development of kindergarten directors, building a team of high-quality kindergarten leaders, and deepening the reform and development of pre-school education, the Ministry of Education of China promulgated and implemented the Professional Standards for Kindergarten Principals in 2015. This standard is the basic requirement for the professional quality of kindergarten qualified heads and the basic criterion for leading the professional development of kindergarten heads. Also, it is an important basis for formulating the qualification standards, training curriculum standards and evaluation criteria for kindergarten leaders. Six core areas of work and professional responsibilities that the director should focus on were established in this standard. In addition, the professional requirements for the heads were refined to 60 items. The problem that how to optimize internal management for kindergarten heads was analysed from the following three aspects: professional understanding, professional knowledge and methods, and professional ability and behaviour. The specific requirements for the optimization of internal management of kindergarten heads are also put forward, which also marks the establishment of the professional status of kindergarten heads.

The Ministry of Education issued the revised Working Regulations for Kindergarten in March 2016. Compared with the abolition of the 1996 version, the following changes have been made: kindergartens should establish a kindergarten board. The kindergarten committee is composed of principals, deputy principals, principals of party organization, representatives of staff in education, healthcare, finance and accounting, and representatives of parents of children. It was stressed that the principal and deputy principal must join the garden board. Besides, it is stipulated that the kindergarten leaders should have the teacher qualification stipulated in the regulations on teacher qualification, college degree or above, more than three years of kindergarten work experience and certain organizational competency, and obtain the kindergarten heads' job training certificate. The kindergarten leaders are responsible for the overall work of the kindergarten, and their main responsibilities are explained. Only by increasing the requirements for entry, making them professional, will more people be attracted to engage in kindergarten management. Only more excellent people are involved, can it expect to improve the overall compensation of kindergarten managers, so as to form a virtuous circle.

From 2010 to now, the density that the document issued is big and the number is large. Taking 2010-2018 as an example, the policies and regulations introduced in the past eight years exceed the comprehensive policies and regulations over the past 30 years. The policy documents cover

a wide range of issues and some of the past documents and regulations have been revised in accordance with the requirements of social development. For example, the requirement on the degree of kindergarten leaders has been raised from the original kindergarten normal school or secondary vocational school to junior college. The promulgation of the PSKP not only affirmed the professional status of kindergarten heads but also specifically divided and elaborated on their competency. However, there is still a lack of operable implementation rules and methods for kindergarten leaders to meet the requirements of the competency stipulated by the state now.

Accordingly, it can be seen that the requirements of policies and regulations on kindergarten principals' competency are being constantly improved but there are still deficiencies. In the future, the formulation of relevant policies should be more focused on practice and application. It is necessary to further put forward clear requirements on the improvement of the kindergarten principal's competency from the legal level and ensure the implementation effect. For example, the entry threshold for kindergarten principals should be further raised, the training effect of kindergarten principals should be strengthened, and the academic authority status of kindergarten principals should be ensured. The professional level of the principal has a direct impact on the development of kindergarten, which is related to the improvement of preschool education quality. Ukrainian education law clearly stipulates that administrative leaders in kindergartens must have a Ph.D. degree or above [14, p. 56]. However, there is no requirement for the degree of kindergarten principal in China at present. Only in the aspect of educational background, the kindergarten principals are required to graduate from junior college or above. In future legislation, higher requirements should be made on education background, degree, and professional training. For kindergarten principals who have been employed but have not yet reached the relevant requirements, the concept of lifelong learning should be strengthened and the corresponding degree should be obtained within a certain period of time. In addition, it is necessary to clarify the training and assessment methods for kindergarten principals by the education authorities and enhance the role of academic authority of kindergarten directors to ensure the scientific development of preschool education institutions.

Conclusions. By analysing the policies and regulations on the management capacity of kindergarten heads during the 41 years of the Chinese reform and opening-up, it is found that the status of the kindergarten leaders' responsibility system has been consolidated and strengthened, and the requirements for entry standards and competency have also been continuously improved with the society development. Through a comprehensive review of a series of policies and regulations, although the state council and the ministry of education have begun to pay attention to the professional quality and competency of kindergarten leaders, there is still a lack of operable methods for kindergarten leaders to meet the requirements of relevant national departments for

their competency. This dilemma will also make some of the kindergarten leaders, especially the heads of rural kindergartens, seem at a loss what to do, and there will be certain difficulties in implementation. Exactly, these are exactly the emphasis and difficulty of the follow-up research.

In conclusion, this article sorts out the typical policies and regulations related to the competency of kindergarten leaders and pays attention to the special group of

kindergarten leaders, in the hope of better summing up the experience and finding the direction of the next step, so as to promote the development of domestic pre-school education management practices. Meanwhile, it also hopes to provide a useful reference for the improvement of policies and regulations of pre-school education and the development of pre-school education management practice in other developing countries.

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КОМПЕТЕНТІСНИЙ ПІДХІД ДО ПІДГОТОВКИ КЕРІВНИКА ДОШКІЛЬНОГО НАВЧАЛЬНОГО ЗАКЛАДУ КИТАЮ

У цій статті розглянуто політику, положення та становлення управлінської компетентності керівника дошкільних закладів за останні 41 рік реформування Китаю. Узагальнено досвід та проаналізовано існуючі проблеми, в ході системного аналізу зроблено акцент на формування розвитку вимог до сучасного керівника дошкільного закладу, як творчої особистості, носія інноваційних процесів, психолога, лідера та закладання в ньому керівної компетенції через удосконалення управління системою освіти на основі світових освітніх технологій. Розвиваючи вже сформовані в науці уявлення стосовно компетентнісного підходу до професійно-педагогічної освіти керівників дошкільних закладів, ми розуміємо єдину систему визначення цілей, відбору змісту, організаційного та технологічного забезпечення процесу підготовки керівника на основі виділення спеціальних, загальних і ключових компетенцій, які гарантують високий рівень і результативність професійно-педагогічної діяльності керівника. Нами визначено, що дефініції «компетенції» в єдиній типології в рамках освітнього процесу не існує. Найчастіше компетенції фахівця поділяються на універсальні (соціально-особистісні, загальнокультурні, загальнонаукові, інструментальні) і професійні. Узагальнено, що компетентнісний підхід включає педагогіку можливостей; знання як засіб перетворення ситуацій; принцип проблемності; соціальної взаємодії; та діяльність в умовах невизначеності. Узагальнено компетентнісний підхід – як комплексний підхід, елементами якого є визначення цілей, відбір змісту, організація освітнього процесу, вибір освітніх технологій, оцінка результатів. Сучасні вимоги до керівників дошкільних закладів це уміння працювати в команді, загальна культура, вміння виявляти ініціативу в роботі,

економічні знання, менеджерські знання і вміння. Компетентнісний підхід в своїй основі передбачає глибоку практикоорієнтовність, тому важлива роль в додатковій професійній підготовці як основи для формування професійних компетенцій, в ході додаткової підготовки, є практика за основним фахом.

Ключові слова: лідер дошкільного закладу, управлінська компетентність, політика та регулювання, професійні стандарти, система головної відповідальності.

КОМПЕТЕНТНОСТНЫЙ ПОДХОД К ПОДГОТОВКЕ РУКОВОДИТЕЛЯ ДОШКОЛЬНЫХ УЧЕБНЫХ ЗАВЕДЕНИЙ КИТАЯ

В этой статье рассмотрены политика, положение и становления управленческой компетентности руководителя дошкольных учреждений за последние 41 год реформирования Китая. Обобщен опыт и проанализированы существующие проблемы, в ходе системного анализа сделан акцент на формирование развития требований к современному руководителю дошкольного учреждения, как личности, носителя инновационных процессов, психолога, лидера и закладывания в нем руководящей компетенции через совершенствование управления системой образования на основе мировых образовательных технологий. Нами определено, что дефиниции «компетенции» в единой типологии в рамках образовательного процесса не существует. Определен, что компетентностный подход – это комплексный подход, элементами которого является определение целей, отбор содержания, организация образовательного процесса, выбор образовательных технологий, оценка результатов.

Ключевые слова: руководитель детского сада, управленческая компетенция, политика и нормативные акты, профессиональные стандарты, система основной ответственности.