

Challenges and Exploratory Pathways for Collaborative Curriculum Development Across Five Domains in Early Childhood Education under the OBE Paradigm

Manxia Wang, Jing Li*

School of Education, Qingdao Binhai University, Qingdao 266555, China

* Corresponding author: Jing Li

Abstract: This study focuses on the collaborative development of the five major domains in early childhood education curricula under the OBE (Outcomes-Based Education) philosophy, with the core objective of addressing the prominent “four emphases and four neglects” issues in current teaching practices. Employing multiple research methods including literature review, case analysis, and action research, it systematically examines the policy context, theoretical foundations, and practical status of collaborative curriculum development across these domains. Building upon an in-depth analysis of the root causes, the study proposes targeted and actionable improvement pathways across multiple dimensions. These include optimizing curriculum content, establishing collaborative teaching models, reforming course evaluation systems, and strengthening university-kindergarten partnerships. By integrating domain-specific knowledge, establishing a spiral-based practical process, and introducing a “dual-mentor” mechanism, the research focuses on enhancing students' theoretical analysis skills, practical innovation capabilities, and knowledge transfer and application abilities. Practical validation demonstrates that collaborative curriculum development across the five domains effectively enhances course coherence and systematicity, significantly elevates students' professional competence and employment competitiveness, and provides a replicable and scalable practical paradigm for cultivating early childhood education professionals in the new era. This approach holds significant theoretical value and practical significance for advancing teaching reform and high-quality development in early childhood education programs.

Keywords: Outcome-Based Education, Early Childhood Education, Five-Domain Curriculum, Collaborative Development, Teaching Reform.

1. Introduction

1.1. Policy Direction: The Contemporary Demand for Cultivating Applied Talent

In 2015, the Ministry of Education issued the “Guiding Opinions on Guiding Some Local General Undergraduate Institutions to Transform into Applied-Oriented Institutions” (Jiaofa [2015] No. 7), explicitly stating that practical competence is the core indicator for cultivating applied talent. It required universities to deepen teaching reforms, strengthen practical teaching components, and enhance students' practical application abilities [1]. Subsequently, the state issued a series of policy documents, including the “Opinions of the Ministry of Education on Strengthening Educational Practice for Teacher Education Students” (2016), further emphasizing the importance of practical training for teacher education students. These documents require universities to establish comprehensive, multi-tiered practical teaching systems, creating platforms for teacher education students to bridge theory with practice [2]. The concentrated release of these policies has charted the course for teaching reform in early childhood education programs while imposing higher standards on the quality of talent cultivation in this field. As the primary training ground for kindergarten teachers, the preschool education program must proactively align with policy directives, focus on cultivating applied talents, break free from traditional teaching models, and explore more scientific and efficient pathways for curriculum development.

1.2. Educational Principles: An Intrinsic Requirement for Children's All-Around Development

The “Guidelines for Kindergarten Education (Trial)” explicitly states: “Content across all domains should be integrated, promoting children's development in emotions, attitudes, abilities, knowledge, and skills from multiple perspectives.” [3] The Learning and Development Guide for Children Aged 3-6 further emphasizes: “Child development is holistic. Attention must be paid to the mutual integration and interconnection between domains and objectives to promote the comprehensive and coordinated physical and mental development of young children.” [4] These documents, grounded in the fundamental principles of early childhood education, clearly define the intrinsic interconnectedness of the five major domain curricula. Children's growth and development constitute an organically unified process; there are no isolated dimensions of development such as health, language, social skills, science, or arts. Therefore, kindergarten educational activities must transcend domain boundaries to achieve the organic integration of content across all domains. As the core curriculum for training kindergarten teachers, the five-domain curriculum in early childhood education programs directly influences teacher candidates' future teaching competencies through its instructional models and structural design. Only through coordinated development of these domains can teacher candidates gain a profound understanding of their interconnections, master integrated teaching methods and strategies, and provide comprehensive, coherent, and

systematic educational services that meet children's holistic developmental needs.

1.3. Professional Accreditation: The Core Benchmark for Quality Enhancement

“Student-centered, outcome-oriented, and continuous improvement” form the fundamental principles of China's higher education program accreditation, serving as a crucial benchmark for evaluating program development quality. As a vital component of teacher education programs, early childhood education's accreditation process imposes explicit requirements on curriculum system development, instructional content reform, and practical teaching arrangements [5]. The Five Domains curriculum, as the core curriculum cluster of early childhood education programs, is the key vehicle for achieving talent cultivation objectives, with its teaching quality directly impacting accreditation outcomes. Currently, issues such as fragmented domains and disconnect between theory and practice in teaching the Five Domains curriculum fall significantly short of professional accreditation principles and requirements. Therefore, leveraging professional accreditation as an opportunity to advance the coordinated development of the Five Domains curriculum is not only an intrinsic necessity for enhancing teaching quality but also an inevitable choice for ensuring successful accreditation and achieving sustainable program development.

1.4. Practical Dilemma: The Prominent Contradiction of the “Four Emphases and Four Neglects”

Despite policy and theoretical emphasis on the synergy and integration of the five domains, practical teaching in early childhood education programs faces numerous challenges, with the “Four Emphases and Four Neglects” phenomenon being particularly pronounced. Issues such as overemphasizing procedural imitation over theoretical analysis, prioritizing simulated design over case study dissection, focusing on teacher grading over student participation, and valuing assignment quantity over quality severely undermine teaching effectiveness and talent cultivation outcomes. These issues result in uneven development of students' professional competencies, disconnect between theoretical knowledge and practical application, and an inability to meet the demands of actual kindergarten teaching. They also diminish students' employability. Therefore, thoroughly analyzing the manifestations and root causes of the “Four Emphases and Four Neglects,” exploring effective solutions, and advancing the collaborative development of the five-domain curriculum have become critical tasks requiring urgent attention in the current reform of preschool education programs.

2. Existing Problems

The “Five Key Domains” guide the theory and practice of preschool education and early childhood teacher education, representing the most crucial and fundamental areas for child development and early childhood education. [6] In the Five Key Areas curriculum teaching of preschool education majors, the “Four Emphases and Four Neglects” issue is particularly prominent, severely impacting teaching quality and students' professional development. [7] Specific manifestations include:

2.1. Emphasis on Process Imitation, Neglect of Theoretical Analysis

In the Five Key Areas curriculum teaching of preschool education majors, students commonly engage in mechanical imitation during practical activities such as activity design and simulated teaching. They lack the ability to analyze, reflect on, and innovate teaching activities from a theoretical perspective. Students often simply replicate teaching procedures from textbooks or online teaching cases, mechanically following fixed sequences like introduction, explanation, interaction, and summary, while neglecting in-depth consideration of the intrinsic connections between teaching objectives, content, methods, and children's developmental characteristics. Simultaneously, students face severe limitations in accessing kindergarten placements for practical teaching experiences, compounded by inadequate institutional support systems. This prevents them from testing and refining their teaching plans in authentic classroom settings, further exacerbating the tendency toward mechanical imitation. For instance, during a simulated language activity themed “Spring,” many students mechanically replicated textbook teaching sequences. They followed predetermined steps-introduction, explanation, interaction, and summary-such as introducing the lesson with spring-themed pictures, then reciting a spring nursery rhyme line by line, followed by simple questions to prompt children's responses. However, students lacked in-depth theoretical analysis regarding why such an introduction was chosen or how to effectively guide children during nursery rhyme instruction based on their language development characteristics. From the perspective of early childhood language development theory, 3-4-year-olds are in a critical period of rapid language growth, making them more receptive to learning through vivid imagery and rhythmic approaches. Yet, when designing activities, students failed to fully consider this theoretical foundation. They merely replicated teaching segments without considering the underlying principles, resulting in activities lacking depth and innovation that could genuinely foster children's language development. This issue stems primarily from three aspects. First, the disconnect between theory and practice in curriculum instruction. Teachers overemphasize the transmission of teaching methods and procedures while neglecting in-depth explanations of educational theory and application guidance. This results in students lacking the awareness and ability to use educational theory to analyze and solve teaching problems. Second, the weakness in practical teaching components. Collaboration between universities and kindergartens is insufficient, and practical teaching arrangements lack systematicity and continuity. Students struggle to gain sufficient authentic teaching experience, often resorting to imitation to complete practical tasks. Third, students exhibit insufficient reflective awareness and innovative capacity. They habitually adopt a passive approach to knowledge acquisition, lacking proactive thinking and exploratory spirit, which hinders their ability to engage in innovative attempts during teaching practice.

2.2. Emphasis on Simulation Design Over Case Analysis

In teaching across the five major domains, instructors often prioritize the formal structure and procedural completeness of student activity lesson plans while neglecting detailed guidance on lesson plan design and practical application.

Simultaneously, during instruction, the integration between teachers' delivery of PCK (Pedagogical Content Knowledge) and its practical application is insufficiently seamless. There is a lack of in-depth analysis of complete teaching cases, hindering students' ability to translate theoretical knowledge into practical teaching skills. While students can design lesson plans that meet formal requirements and follow complete procedures, they often become overwhelmed when faced with real teaching situations. They struggle to flexibly adjust teaching strategies and achieve instructional objectives. For instance, when explaining how to help young children understand the nutritional value of different foods, teachers often select fragmented examples-such as briefly showing pictures of a fruit and listing its nutrients-without analyzing a comprehensive teaching case. This prevents students from grasping how to integrate nutritional knowledge into engaging activities tailored to children's cognitive levels and interests in real teaching scenarios. In actual kindergarten settings, teachers could organize a "Food Classification Challenge" game to help children recognize different foods and their nutritional values while instilling healthy eating concepts. However, due to the lack of integrated case analysis and the failure to consistently integrate relevant knowledge across all teaching domains, students struggle to translate theoretical knowledge into practical teaching skills. When confronted with real teaching scenarios, they cannot flexibly apply their PCK knowledge to design effective teaching activities. This issue primarily stems from misaligned teaching philosophies among educators, who overly emphasize formal teaching outcomes while neglecting the cultivation of students' practical teaching abilities. Simultaneously, teachers' own PCK knowledge reserves and case teaching competencies are insufficient, making it difficult to select representative, complete teaching cases or conduct in-depth analysis and explanation of them. Furthermore, the scarcity of curriculum teaching resources, including the lack of systematic case libraries and practical guidance materials, also limits the effective implementation of case-based teaching.

2.3. Emphasis on Teacher Grading Over Student Participation

The current evaluation system for the five major domains in early childhood education programs suffers from significant uniformity and one-sidedness. Evaluation is primarily teacher-driven, with minimal student involvement, resulting in outcomes lacking objectivity and fairness. Teacher assessments often remain vague, lacking specific criteria and detailed feedback, thus failing to effectively promote student learning and development. Peer assessment sessions are largely perfunctory, with students merely assigning scores without deeply considering the strengths and weaknesses of their peers or offering concrete suggestions for improvement. This approach fails to achieve the goal of mutual learning and collective progress. For instance, during an assessment themed "Creating Animal Masks," some students in peer evaluations simply stated, "Well done, high score," without providing detailed feedback on creativity, color coordination, or craftsmanship. This superficial approach fails to stimulate deep thinking among students, hindering their ability to learn from peers' strengths and actively engage in self-improvement. This issue primarily stems from outdated evaluation philosophies, where teachers persist in a "teacher-centered" perspective, neglecting

students' active role in the assessment process. Additionally, the absence of scientifically sound evaluation criteria and tools results in a lack of standardization and practicality in the assessment process. Furthermore, students lack training in evaluation skills, do not understand how to conduct effective peer assessments, and fail to fully recognize the importance of participating in evaluations, resulting in peer assessment becoming a mere formality.

2.4. Emphasis on Quantity Over Quality of Assignments

In teaching the five major subject areas, teachers often place excessive emphasis on the quantity of assignments while neglecting their quality and relevance. Assignments often lack innovation and practicality, primarily consisting of repetitive, mechanical tasks such as copying, memorization, and lesson plan writing, which struggle to stimulate students' interest and initiative. During grading, teachers frequently assign scores without providing detailed feedback on issues, insufficiently integrating Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK), and rarely offering specific revision suggestions. This prevents students from clearly identifying their shortcomings and hinders their professional growth through assignments. For instance, when designing a "Kindergarten Sharing Day" activity, a student presented unclear procedural steps and failed to adequately account for individual differences among young children. During grading, the teacher merely noted the activity design flaws and assigned a low score without detailing the specific issues or explaining how to improve the design using theories of children's social interaction development (a component of PCK knowledge). This leaves students unable to pinpoint their shortcomings after completing assignments, hindering both assignment quality and the effective application of learned knowledge to practical teaching. Consequently, students' mastery of professional knowledge and development of teaching skills suffer. This issue primarily stems from teachers' misaligned assignment design philosophy, which views assignments solely as tools for knowledge reinforcement while overlooking their crucial role in cultivating students' practical, innovative, and problem-solving abilities. Simultaneously, educators lack sufficient time and energy for meticulous grading, resulting in delayed and imprecise feedback. Furthermore, the disconnect between course content and assignment design-where assignments fail to fully reflect core knowledge points and competency development objectives-further diminishes assignment quality and effectiveness.

3. Improvement Pathways

The "outcomes-oriented" approach focuses on student learning outcomes, emphasizing the optimization of curriculum design and teaching processes guided by educational objectives and practical needs. The coordinated development of the five major domains in early childhood education programs is crucial for enhancing educational quality and cultivating professional talent. Under this outcomes-oriented philosophy, the following practical recommendations are proposed:

3.1. Optimize Curriculum Content to Embody Four "Greater Emphases"

3.1.1. Greater Emphasis on Ideological Content

Ideological substance constitutes the soul of the curriculum

and is central to fulfilling the fundamental mission of fostering virtue through education. During the optimization of content across the five domains, deeply explore the ideological and political education elements within each course. Integrate the core mission of moral education with the “Five Educations and Five Transformations” (moral cultivation nurtures the heart, intellectual development paves the way for the future, physical education strengthens mind and body, aesthetic education refines character, labor education builds skills; Integrating Ideological Education into Curriculum, Project-Based Curriculum Content, Practical Teaching Processes, Diversified Academic Assessment, and Extracurricular Learning Outcomes). In social studies courses, select authentic cases embodying core socialist values around themes such as “caring for others,” “ethnic unity,” and “social responsibility” as teaching materials. For instance, introducing cases like community volunteers caring for elderly individuals living alone or the exemplary deeds of frontline medical workers during the pandemic guides students to reflect on the significance and methods of caring for others, fostering compassion, responsibility, and social ethics. Through group discussions, thematic speeches, and role-playing during instruction, students deeply internalize the underlying values of these cases, transforming them into personal behavioral guidelines. In arts education, emphasis is placed on exploring artistic elements from China's outstanding traditional culture, selecting representative works such as folk paper-cutting, traditional painting, and ethnic music as teaching content. For instance, paper-cutting instruction not only teaches basic techniques but also introduces students to the art form's historical origins, cultural significance, and regional characteristics, allowing them to experience the charm of traditional Chinese culture while enhancing cultural confidence and national pride. Simultaneously, students are encouraged to integrate traditional cultural elements with modern artistic forms for innovative creation, fostering both cultural heritage awareness and creative capabilities. In health-related courses, content such as life education and safety education is incorporated in alignment with the “Healthy China” strategy. By teaching common disease prevention and emergency response knowledge, students develop health awareness and self-protection skills. Through case studies and scenario simulations, students are guided to cultivate a proper perspective on life and health, cherishing life and caring for themselves and others.

3.1.2. Greater Emphasis on Foundational Knowledge

Foundational knowledge serves as the cornerstone for students' professional development and is essential for engaging in teaching practice. The curriculum teams across the five domains should strengthen collective lesson planning, systematically organize foundational knowledge across domains, and compile a “Volume One” question bank. This ensures students memorize and master the material, enabling them to “instantly recall” and “effortlessly apply” it during instructional design and teaching practice. In the language domain, the “Volume One” question bank should cover foundational knowledge such as the developmental stages of early childhood language, fundamental principles and methods of language instruction, common types of nursery rhymes and stories and their pedagogical applications, and the identification and intervention of language disorders in young children. For example, it should clarify that 3-4-year-olds primarily use simple sentences and exhibit a preference for

repetition and imitation in their language development. Students should also master common language teaching methods such as situational teaching, game-based teaching, and story-based teaching, along with their appropriate application scenarios. Through classroom instruction, post-class recitation, and unit assessments, reinforce students' mastery of these foundational concepts. In the health domain, the “Volume 1” question bank should include early childhood physical development indicators, common disease prevention knowledge, methods for cultivating healthy lifestyle habits, and principles for designing and organizing physical activities for young children. For instance: understand normal height and weight ranges for 3-6-year-olds; Mastering transmission routes and prevention measures for common infectious diseases like hand-foot-and-mouth disease and influenza; familiarizing with design principles and organizational procedures for preschool morning exercises and physical games. Through case studies and practical exercises, students integrate foundational knowledge with real-world teaching scenarios to enhance application skills. In the science domain, the “Volume 1” question bank should cover fundamental concepts and principles of natural science, characteristics and methods of early childhood scientific inquiry, and the design and organization of science education activities. For example, mastering scientific knowledge such as the fundamental processes of plant growth, the basic effects of force, and the causes of common natural phenomena; understanding the characteristics of young children's scientific inquiry, such as strong curiosity and emphasis on hands-on activities; learning to design different types of science education activities, including observation-based, experiment-based, and creation-based activities. Through classroom demonstrations and group experiments, students enhance their understanding and retention of fundamental knowledge.

3.1.3. Greater Emphasis on Integration

Integration is the core feature of coordinated curriculum development across the five domains and a key to achieving children's comprehensive development. Teachers across domains must transcend disciplinary boundaries, strengthen cross-domain collective teaching research, deeply explore common knowledge and intrinsic connections between domains, and achieve organic integration of curriculum content. This ensures that earlier courses lay the groundwork for subsequent ones, while later courses provide opportunities for practical extension of prior learning. During curriculum design, teachers from all five domains collaboratively establish curriculum standards and syllabi, clarifying teaching objectives, content, and priorities for each domain while identifying shared themes and knowledge points across domains. For instance, the theme “Developing Daily Habits in Young Children” can be integrated through storytelling and nursery rhymes in the language domain, taught via physiological knowledge and behavioral demonstrations in the health domain, and cultivated through group collaboration and scenario simulations in the social domain to foster children's awareness of rules. During implementation, cross-domain teaching activities should be conducted using shared themes as connecting threads. For instance, around the theme of “Autumn”: The physical education domain held an “Autumn Sports Day” to enhance children's physical fitness; the social studies domain conducted an “Autumn Harvest” activity to introduce autumn crops and cultivate awareness of food appreciation. This cross-domain thematic teaching breaks down barriers between domains, organically integrates

curriculum content, and teaches students to design activities from multiple perspectives, promoting children's holistic development. Simultaneously, curriculum sequencing emphasizes continuity and progression between courses. For instance, Language and Health domains are introduced first, focusing on developing foundational teaching skills and understanding early childhood developmental characteristics. Science, Arts, and Social Studies domains follow later, building upon these foundations to cultivate cross-domain integration and innovative teaching abilities. This progressive sequence ensures gradual enhancement of professional competencies.

3.1.4. Greater Emphasis on Transferability

In the information age, knowledge updates at an accelerating pace, making fixed knowledge alone insufficient to meet evolving demands. Therefore, teaching across the five domains must cultivate students' ability to transfer knowledge, enabling them to apply learned concepts flexibly across diverse teaching scenarios and address unpredictable challenges. In science education, open-ended questions and hands-on projects guide students to solve real-world problems using acquired knowledge. For instance, after studying "Floating and Sinking of Objects," teachers pose open-ended questions like "How can we make an egg float in water?" or "How do submarines achieve buoyancy?" prompting students to conduct group experiments. Through repeated attempts—such as altering water density or modifying object shapes—students discover methods to make eggs float and explain submarine principles using their acquired knowledge. This process not only reinforces the principles of buoyancy but also develops practical problem-solving skills, knowledge transfer abilities, and innovative thinking. In arts education, encourage students to transfer learned artistic techniques and expression methods to diverse creative projects. For instance, after learning color application and brushstroke techniques in watercolor painting, students are guided to apply these skills to other painting genres like oil painting and colored pencil drawing. Following instruction in vocal techniques and emotional expression for song performance, they are encouraged to utilize these skills in poetry recitation and theatrical performances. This cross-artistic transfer training broadens students' artistic horizons while enhancing their expressive abilities and creativity. In language education, emphasis is placed on cultivating students' ability to transfer language teaching methods to instruction for different themes and age groups. For instance, after mastering the application of storytelling methods in language teaching for 3-4-year-olds, students are guided to consider how to adapt story selection, question design, and activity organization based on the language development characteristics of 5-6-year-olds, flexibly applying storytelling methods across different age groups. Simultaneously, students are encouraged to integrate language instruction with other domains. For instance, in science education, language teaching methods can guide children to describe scientific inquiry processes and outcomes, enhancing both their language expression skills and scientific literacy.

3.2. Building Collaborative Teaching Models to Enhance Reflective Practice

3.2.1. Guided by Exemplary Cases

Establish a spiral teaching process of "observation and analysis – design and implementation – reflection and evaluation – design modification – re-implementation – re-

reflection." Guided by exemplary cases, students continuously enhance their teaching practice and reflective abilities through this iterative cycle. First, curate exemplary case materials. Teachers should collaborate with partner kindergartens, collect award-winning lesson examples from national early childhood education competitions, and invite renowned kindergarten teachers to record instructional videos to build a rich repository of exemplary cases. Cases in the repository should cover themes across all five domains, demonstrating representativeness, relevance, and inspiration while embodying advanced educational philosophies and scientific teaching methods. For instance: - Language domain: Storytelling cases emphasizing cognitive stimulation and language expression development - Science domain: Experiment-based cases prioritizing independent inquiry and hands-on activities - Arts domain: Creative expression cases encouraging innovative communication and individual development Second, guide students in observation and analysis. During instruction, teachers select exemplary cases and organize students into groups for observation. Before observation, teachers clarify objectives and requirements, prompting students to observe with specific questions in mind, such as: "What are the teaching objectives in this case?" "What are the distinctive features of the teaching methods?" "How does the teacher respond to unexpected questions from children?" "How do children perform during the activity?" During observation, students record their observations and reflections by watching instructional videos, reading lesson plans, and other means. Following the observation, students engage in group discussions to share insights and experiences, conducting in-depth analyses of the case's strengths and weaknesses. The teacher provides feedback and summaries based on these discussions, guiding students to analyze the case from multiple dimensions—educational philosophy, teaching objectives, instructional methods, classroom organization, and child development—to help them grasp the underlying pedagogical principles and methodologies. Third, students design and implement lessons. Building on the case analysis, students work in groups to develop teaching activity plans integrating their knowledge and early childhood development principles. Teachers guide and refine these plans to ensure scientific validity, feasibility, and innovation. Students then conduct simulated teaching sessions based on the revised plans. During simulations, teachers and peers act as "children," mimicking young learners' behaviors and reactions to create authentic teaching scenarios. Students experience the teaching process through simulation, honing skills such as activity organization, verbal expression, and adaptability. Finally, reflection, evaluation, and refinement take place. After the simulation, students engage in reflective evaluation: first conducting self-assessments to identify strengths and weaknesses; then participating in peer group evaluations to exchange improvement suggestions; Instructors provide comprehensive, objective feedback based on students' teaching performance and evaluations, identifying issues in achieving teaching objectives, applying teaching methods, and designing instructional sequences, while offering specific revision suggestions. Students then revise their teaching plans according to this feedback, conduct another simulated teaching session, and engage in further reflection and evaluation. Through this spiral-like practice cycle—involving continuous practice, reflection, revision, and re-practice—students progressively enhance their teaching practice abilities and reflective skills. Simultaneously, a "dual

mentor” guidance mechanism [8] is established, involving both university faculty and kindergarten teachers. University faculty primarily provide theoretical guidance, helping students master educational theories and curriculum design methods. Kindergarten teachers focus on practical demonstration, showcasing authentic kindergarten teaching scenarios and methods while guiding students' teaching practice. The dual mentors engage in regular communication and collaboration to jointly develop student training plans and guidance strategies, promptly addressing challenges encountered during learning and practice. For instance, after university faculty explain theories of early childhood language development in class, kindergarten teachers lead students into preschools to observe authentic language teaching activities, enabling students to integrate theoretical knowledge with practice. During simulated teaching sessions, both mentors provide joint guidance and evaluation, offering improvement suggestions from both theoretical and practical perspectives.

3.2.2. Aligned Question Lists

Students engage in cooperative learning using reflective scaffolding-question lists-provided by teachers. After observing and analyzing master teachers or online resources, they conduct simulated practice sessions to reflect on issues in instructional design and implementation. Teachers develop detailed, targeted reflective question lists for each of the five preschool education domains and their respective objectives. Taking the teaching example of “Cultivating Healthy Eating Habits in Young Children” from the health domain, the checklist includes: Are the teaching objectives aligned with children's current developmental needs and cognitive levels? How can teachers promptly identify children's points of interest and adjust teaching strategies during activities? Do the teaching methods employed (e.g., scenario simulations, demonstration explanations) effectively promote children's understanding of healthy eating knowledge and behavioral changes? During group collaborative learning, students first analyze exemplary teaching videos or high-quality online resources using the question lists. Within each group, members divide tasks: some document teaching sequences, others observe children's reactions, and others analyze the teacher's instructional strategies. For example, while watching a kindergarten teacher conduct a “Healthy Food Sharing Session,” students use the checklist to analyze whether the teacher's activity objectives are reasonable, observe how the teacher guides children to independently choose healthy foods, and examine how the teacher handles picky eating behaviors. After the observation, the group engages in in-depth discussion, sharing observations and reflections based on the checklist to collectively identify issues in instructional design and implementation. Subsequently, students conduct simulated practice based on discussion outcomes. During simulation, they repeatedly reflect on key points from the checklist, continuously adjusting and refining their teaching behaviors. This process effectively enhances instructional design and implementation skills while addressing practical teaching challenges.

3.3. Reforming Course Assessment to Focus on Competency Outcomes

Establish a diversified formative assessment mechanism that comprehensively evaluates students' classroom performance, group collaboration participation, assignment quality, unit test scores, and reading notes. Utilize online

learning platforms to document student engagement, encouraging active participation in classroom discussions and group work. Enhance summative assessment: while “Paper Two” emphasizes the application of teaching strategies, innovative activity design, and overall pedagogical competence to comprehensively evaluate students' competency levels.

3.3.1. Curriculum Content Evaluation

Formative assessment comprises multiple components including classroom performance (online + offline), assignment quality, unit tests, and reading notes, divided into both group and individual assignments. This approach enhances quality through collaborative work while facilitating individual progress and improvement. The reformed summative assessment for “Paper One” centers on policy guidelines such as the “Guidelines for Preschool Education (Trial)” and the “Learning and Development Guide for Children Aged 3-6,” reinforcing teacher candidates' grasp of early childhood learning characteristics and subject content. Paper Two primarily evaluates students' acquisition of subject-specific teaching strategies and overall pedagogical competence.

(1) Formative Assessment

① Classroom Performance: During online instruction, student participation is tracked using interactive features of live platforms, such as attendance checks, quick response activities, and contributions in group discussion forums. In-person classes focus on students' willingness to ask and answer questions, as well as their contributions during group collaboration. For example, in an online group discussion for a health-themed lesson, students are scored based on the frequency of their posts in the discussion forum, the quality of their perspectives, and their responses to peers' ideas. Additionally, in-person evaluations assess organizational skills and adaptability during simulated teaching activities.

② Assignment Quality: Assignments are divided into individual and group tasks. Individual assignments focus on knowledge mastery and application, such as teaching reflection reports, activity design proposals with pilot implementation (including instructional video recordings), evaluated based on analytical depth and the reasonableness of improvement measures. Group assignments emphasize teamwork, such as designing a cross-disciplinary kindergarten theme activity. Evaluation focuses on whether team members divided tasks reasonably, demonstrated effective collaboration, and the innovation and feasibility of the activity plan. All assessments include teacher evaluation, self-evaluation, and peer evaluation, accompanied by specific revision suggestions.

③ Unit Tests: Test questions are designed based on each unit's teaching objectives and key content, covering multiple formats including multiple-choice questions, short-answer questions, and case analysis questions. For instance, in the science domain unit test, multiple-choice questions assess scientific concepts, while analysis questions require students to design science inquiry activities based on given case studies, comprehensively evaluating their understanding and application of unit knowledge.

④ Reading Notes: Students are required to write reading notes after studying books and literature related to early childhood education. Evaluation focuses on their comprehension of the content, ability to extract key points, and depth of reflection in relation to their own teaching

practice. For instance, after reading *Preschool Children's Science Education*, students may elaborate in their notes on how the book's science education methods can be applied in actual teaching, with their learning gains assessed accordingly.

(2) Summative Assessment

① Paper One: Questions are primarily based on policy documents such as the *Guidelines for Kindergarten Education (Trial)* and the *Learning and Development Guide for Children Aged 3-6*. Single-choice, multiple-choice, and true/false questions test students' recall of foundational knowledge like key concepts and developmental goals. Short-answer questions require students to explain how these documents guide teaching in specific kindergarten domains. Essay questions ask students to analyze, using real-world examples, how to implement teaching activities based on the documents' principles, reinforcing their grasp of children's learning characteristics and curriculum content.

② Paper Two: Primarily assesses students' strategic knowledge of domain-specific teaching and their overall pedagogical competence. By presenting complex teaching scenario cases, students are required to design instructional plans. Their acquisition of strategic teaching knowledge is evaluated based on the rationality of instructional objectives, selection and application of teaching methods, organization of the teaching process, and design of instructional assessment. Simultaneously, the assessment examines students' overall pedagogical competence, including innovative thinking, problem-solving abilities, and attention to individual differences among young children as reflected in their instructional plans.

3.3.2. Course Participation Evaluation

Platforms like “Learning Pass” are used to evaluate students' daily course engagement: The system automatically records data such as login frequency, video viewing duration, assignment submission timeliness and frequency, and discussion participation activity. Instructors regularly review these statistics to analyze students' learning habits and engagement levels. For instance, students with insufficient video viewing time or frequent late assignments receive timely reminders and communication to understand their learning challenges and provide support. Additionally, students receive bonus points based on the quality of their discussion contributions-such as posing valuable questions or offering reasonable insights and suggestions-to incentivize active course engagement.

Evaluating Transfer and Innovation Skills through Kindergarten-University Curriculum Partnerships: Collaborate with partner kindergartens to establish curriculum communities, organizing student teaching practicums at these institutions. During these sessions, kindergarten teachers and university faculty jointly observe students' instructional performance. For instance, when conducting art-based teaching activities at the kindergarten, teachers observe whether students can organically integrate and innovatively apply diverse artistic expressions learned in class (e.g., painting, crafts, music), adapt teaching strategies flexibly based on children's real-time responses during activities, and transfer knowledge acquired across different courses into practical teaching scenarios. Building upon student self-assessments and peer evaluations, comprehensive and objective assessments of students' transfer and innovation abilities are conducted through joint evaluations by both kindergarten and university faculty.

3.4. Emphasizing Collaborative Development to Expand Curriculum Resources

3.4.1. Jointly Developing Reflective and Innovative Teaching Resources

On one hand, existing resources are shared. Teachers across the five domains first integrate existing resources-such as micro-lecture videos, online courses, virtual simulation projects, and case libraries-and upload them to a unified teaching resource platform for convenient access by teachers and students. For example, science teachers share their “Exploring Plant Growth Processes” micro-lecture video on the platform. Teachers from other domains can draw inspiration from its teaching methods and presentation formats, or utilize it as supplementary material for cross-domain instruction. On the other hand, new resources are developed: Regular cross-domain teaching seminars are organized to collaboratively create new teaching materials addressing hot topics and challenges in early childhood education. For instance, around the theme “How to Cultivate Children's Cross-Domain Comprehensive Abilities,” teachers collaboratively design virtual simulation projects that replicate authentic kindergarten teaching scenarios. This allows students to practice cross-domain teaching in a virtual environment, guiding them to reflect on teaching challenges during the process and fostering innovative instructional approaches. Simultaneously, teachers are encouraged to create innovative micro-lesson videos based on their teaching experience and the latest educational research, such as presenting content through novel formats like animation and gamification.

3.4.2. Collaborating with Key Kindergarten Teachers and Experts to Develop Micro-Lesson Materials

Key kindergarten teachers and renowned educators are invited to participate in micro-lesson material development. First, multiple preschool education textbooks are reviewed and curated to extract core knowledge points and essential teaching skills. These are then restructured and refined based on practical kindergarten teaching needs and children's developmental characteristics. For instance, when developing micro-lesson materials for language education, complex linguistic theories and methodologies from textbooks are simplified into accessible key points based on children's developmental stages. These are supplemented with numerous authentic kindergarten teaching cases, presented in an illustrated format. This creates a “pocket-sized resource” that students can easily reference, memorize, and apply, helping them rapidly master teaching knowledge and skills while enhancing practical teaching abilities.

4. Conclusion

This study focuses on the collaborative development of the five major domains in preschool education curricula under the OBE philosophy. Through an in-depth analysis of the “four emphases and four neglects” issues currently present in teaching these domains, it proposes a series of targeted and actionable improvement pathways. These include optimizing curriculum content, establishing collaborative teaching models, reforming the curriculum evaluation system, and strengthening university-kindergarten collaboration. Findings indicate that collaborative curriculum development effectively addresses traditional issues such as disciplinary fragmentation and disconnect between theory and practice, enhancing overall coherence and systematicity. Optimizing

content to emphasize ideological depth, foundational knowledge, integration, and transferability lays a solid foundation for students' professional growth. Implementing a spiral-based practical process and a “dual-mentor” system significantly improves students' teaching practice skills and reflective innovation abilities. Reforming the course evaluation system enables comprehensive and objective assessment of students' learning outcomes and competency levels. Strengthening college-kindergarten collaborative development expands course resources and enhances practical relevance and targeted effectiveness. Practice demonstrates that the five-domain courses developed through this collaborative approach significantly improve students' theoretical analysis, practical innovation, and knowledge transfer capabilities, bolstering their employment competitiveness and providing a scientifically effective practical paradigm for early childhood education talent cultivation.

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