

# Professional Identity and Leadership Capabilities of College Physical Education Teachers

Xuemin Li

Graduate school, Adamson University, 900 San Marcelino St., Ermita, Manila, Philippines

**Abstract:** The purpose of this study is to explore the professional identity and leadership of college physical education teachers in Shandong Province. It provides the research basis for improving the professional identity of PE teachers, improving their leadership, promoting the training of talents in colleges and universities, and strengthening the construction of teachers. This study adopts the methods of quantitative research design, questionnaire survey and random sampling, and selects 205 physical education teachers from 5 colleges and universities in Shandong Province as the investigation objects. The survey found that given the respondents' profile, they are capable of developing a professional identity with teacher leadership. Respondents have failed their teaching careers in different ways than others. Given effective interventions, respondents can further strengthen their professional identity. The influence of personal experience on the level of professional identity is the least. Respondents were fully engaged in teacher leadership, but there was still a large gap. Given effective intervention, they can further improve their leadership ability. Educational background is one of the factors affecting teachers' leadership ability. Teacher professional identity and teacher leadership can develop simultaneously. Teacher development provides opportunities and interventions that may produce optimal results.

**Keywords:** College Physical Education Teachers; Leadership Capabilities; Professional Identity.

## 1. Introduction

Education is the foundation of building a country. It is very important to promote the development of education and train high-quality talents and backbone teachers. The key to the development and reform of college education quality is the training and construction of teaching staff. The Opinions of the CPC Central Committee and The State Council on Comprehensively Deepening the Reform of the Construction of Teachers in the New Era (2017) put forward that high-quality teachers should be cultivated. Teacher leadership is one of the professional qualities of teachers, which will affect the quality of school education and teaching, and is also the driving force to promote the modernization of education. It is emphasized that each teacher should give full play to his/her potential, interact with his/her colleagues in a two-way way, promote the collaborative development of teachers through non-driving factors such as his/her personality characteristics and professional quality, and lead the reform of higher education. Professional identity means that individual college teachers can identify with and accept the educational cause they are currently engaged in, feel the happy experience brought by the career, and gradually establish the role of teachers after explaining and reflecting on their own relevant experiences, and produce a firm belief in fighting for the educational cause. Only when college teachers highly recognize and actively accept the industry they are engaged in, can they give full play to their initiative and creativity under the existing conditions, enthusiastically devote themselves to the education work of colleges and universities, and care for and respect every student. Therefore, the leadership and professional identity of college teachers are related to the improvement of the quality of education and teaching and the professional development of teachers.

According to the research direction, this paper studies the basic characteristics of professional identity and leadership of college physical education teachers in Shandong Province.

Then, the basic information of the respondents, including gender, age, teaching years, education, professional identity level and leadership level, as well as the differences of each variable in gender, age, education level, title, working years and other levels, was investigated. From the point of view of teachers, this paper makes a statistical analysis of the relationship between professional identity and leadership of college physical education teachers. The research results can be used to improve the professional identity and leadership ability of college PE teachers, promote the healthy development of work efficiency, and provide research basis for formulating and selecting intervention programs to improve the professional identity and leadership ability of college PE teachers.

## 2. Research Paradigm

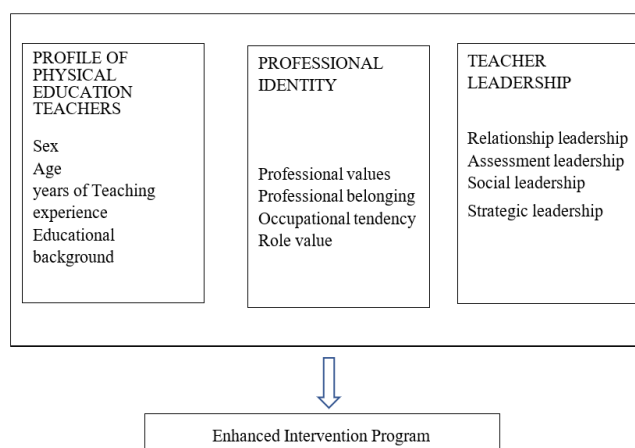


Fig 1. Research Paradigm

As indicated in the research paradigm above, the researchers will determine the teacher profile based on their gender, age, teaching experience, and highest level of education. Secondly, four dimensions of teachers'

professional identity are studied. Third, investigate the status quo of teachers' leadership. This study focuses on the relationship between professional identity and leadership of college physical education teachers. Then the specific aspects of the influence are analyzed, and corresponding strategies are put forward to enhance the professional identity and leadership of college physical education teachers.

### 3. Results

#### 3.1. Professional Values

**Table 1.** How the respondents rated their teacher professional identity in terms of professional values

Items	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1.I think the teaching profession is very important to promote the development of human beings.	3.77	0.47	Highly Evident
2.I think the work of teachers is very important to promote the growth and development of students.	3.78	0.46	Highly Evident
3.I think the work of teachers plays an important role in the development of human society.	3.78	0.44	Highly Evident
4.I think the teaching profession is one of the most important occupations in the social division of labor.	3.80	0.43	Highly Evident
Overall	3.78		Highly Evident

*Legend: 3.51-4.00 Highly Evident, 2.51-3.50 Evident, 1.51-2.50 Slightly Evident, 1.00 -1.50 Not Evident*

Table presents how the respondents rated their teacher professional identity in terms of professional values. This domain got an overall mean of 3.78 which means that the respondents' professional values is highly evident. This is best seen in item 4 which got the highest mean of 3.80. It says that the respondents think of teaching profession as one of the most important occupations in the social division of labor. The respondents also consider. The respondents also think that the work of teachers is very important in promoting the growth and development of students, and the whole society. The respondents' perception that teaching is very important in the development of human beings (item 1) also proves their high regard for their profession. While this indicator (item 1) got the lowest mean (3.77) it is still very close to the highest mean of 3.80. This suggests that this indicator may not be considered a weak point in the respondents' professional value.

The finding that teacher professional identity is highly evident in terms of professional value conforms with the result of the study conducted by Bhebhe and Nxumalo (2016). They found out that teachers in Swaziland view themselves as valuable human resource not just in school but in the community. They consider their profession as noble because individual pass through their hands when pursuing their professions. The finding is also similar to what was reported by Zhong (2023). Her study revealed that Chinese university teachers have highly manifested professional values which was highlighted by their claim that teaching enable them to realize the value of life.

#### 3.2. Relationship Leadership

**Table 2.** The assessment of leadership capabilities in terms of relationship leadership

Items	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1. I demonstrated effective communication skills when working with colleagues.	3.34	0.56	Evident
2. I help resolve conflicts between colleagues.	3.31	0.57	Evident
3. I help cultivate good relationships with colleagues.	3.35	0.60	Evident
4. I help others appreciate the best in each colleague.	3.35	0.54	Evident
5. I observe my colleagues' classroom teaching and give them advice.	3.30	0.57	Evident
Overall	3.33		Evident

*Legend: 3.51-4.00 Highly Evident, 2.51-3.50 Evident, 1.51-2.50 Slightly Evident, 1.00 -1.50 Not Evident*

Table presents the assessment of leadership capabilities in terms of relationship leadership. With an overall mean of 3.33, the relationship leadership of the respondents is considered evident. The top indicators of this domain are items 3 and 4 which got the highest mean of 3.35. This implies that the respondents cultivate good relationships with colleagues, and help other appreciate the best in each other. The respondents also demonstrated effective communication skills when working with colleagues, and resolve conflicts with them. The respondents' practice of observing classroom teaching and giving advice (item 5) is evident also, however, it is at the bottom of the indicators with a mean of 3.30 only. This shows that the practice of this indicators is not as evident as the others. The finding partly conforms with the study of Zhou et al. (2021). Their study reported that teachers foster good relations with colleagues and build strong collaborative relationships.

### 4. Conclusion

1 Given the profile of the respondents, they are capable of developing professional identity and teacher leadership.

2 The respondents are living up to their teaching profession in ways distinct from other careers. Given an effective intervention, the respondents can further strengthen their professional identity.

3 Profile factors played a minimal role in the level of professional identity of the respondents. The respondents, therefore, have the same potential when it comes to strengthening their professional identity.

4 The respondents are adequately engaged in teacher leadership but there is still a big room for its improvement. Given an effective intervention, the respondents can further enhance their leadership capabilities.

5 Educational background is a factor to teacher leadership. Teachers with bachelor's degree and those with master's degree may have different perspectives of teacher leadership already.

6 The teacher professional identity and teacher leadership can develop simultaneously. Providing opportunities and intervention for teachers to develop both may produce optimal result.

## 5. Recommendations

1) Based on the profile of the respondents, they are capable of further developing their professional identity and their teacher leadership. The school should provide opportunities for its further development.

2) The school should enhance the professional identity of their teachers. They can do it by providing an intervention program which will enhance their awareness of professional identity, and give opportunity to speak about their experiences which defined their profession very well.

3) The role of some profile factors to professional identity should be taken into account in the intervention to be given to the respondents. This can be done by providing opportunities for teachers from different profile factors to interact with one another. It can be done by making a diverse compositions of groups in workshops and breakout sessions.

4) The school should enhance the leadership capabilities of their teachers. They can do it by providing an intervention program which will enhance their understanding of teacher leadership, and identify opportunities to engage in it.

5) The role of some profile factors to teacher leadership, especially educational background should be taken into consideration in the intervention to be given to the respondents. This can be done by providing opportunities for teachers from different profile factors to interact with one another. It can be done by making a diverse compositions of groups in workshops and breakout sessions.

6) The intervention for enhancing professional identity and teacher leadership should be simultaneous under one program only. Given the strong correlation between these two variables, it is most likely to produce better results when implemented under one program rather than separately.

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