

Psychological Determinants of Developing Professional Skills in Future Preschool Education Staff

Turopova Ma'mura Safar Qizi^{1*}

Qarshi State University, Qarshi, Uzbekistan¹

[TurpovaMamura44@gmail.com](mailto:TuropovaMamura44@gmail.com)^{1*}



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Abstract

Purpose: This study aims to explore the psychological determinants that shape the development of professional skills among future preschool education staff, emphasizing the role of personal qualities and psychological factors in professional preparedness.

Research Methodology: The research is based on a systematic review and synthesis of scholarly works from CIS and international contexts. It analyzes motivational, cognitive, emotional, and communicative dimensions that influence competence building in preschool education.

Results: The findings indicate that responsibility, independence, initiative, creative thinking, empathy, and social activity significantly enhance the formation of professional competencies. Moreover, the integration of “hard skills” and “self skills” strengthens readiness for practice, while empathy and sociability play an essential role in effective collaboration with children and their parents.

Conclusions: Psychological determinants are strongly interconnected with professional motivation, flexibility of thinking, and emotional values, making them crucial for the effective preparation of future specialists in preschool education.

Limitations: The study is conceptual in nature and does not include empirical testing. Future research should incorporate field studies and experimental designs to validate these determinants in practical contexts.

Contributions: This article contributes to educational psychology and teacher training literature by highlighting the psychological basis of skill formation, offering insights for improving professional training programs for preschool education staff.

Keywords: *Creative Thinking, Empathy, Motivation, Preschool Education, Professional Skills*

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1. Introduction

The preschool education system is regarded as a crucial stage in the development of human capital in modern society. In the early stages of childhood, the formation of mental processes, personal traits, and social skills largely depends on the quality of educational and upbringing practices. Therefore, the professional skills of specialists working in preschool educational organizations are considered not only a factor determining the effectiveness of pedagogical processes but also a key condition for

children's future social adaptation and personal development. The process of developing professional skills is of a complex nature, relying not only on theoretical knowledge but also on motivational, cognitive, emotional, and communicative determinants ([Ibrahim, Ariyanti, & Iskanto, 2024](#)). As highlighted in contemporary psychology and pedagogy, personal qualities such as responsibility, independence, initiative, creative thinking, empathy, sociability, and social activity play a decisive role in shaping the readiness and success of future preschool education staff in their professional activities ([Arushanova, 2018](#); [Bakina, 2019](#)).

In today's global education system, ensuring a balance between “hard skills” and “soft/self skills” has become a particularly relevant issue. Specifically, in the field of preschool education, teachers' empathy, social adaptability, and communicative competence serve as fundamental psychological determinants of professional efficiency, especially in working with children and their parents. From this perspective, the relevance of the present research lies in its ability to provide theoretical insights and practical implications for improving pedagogical practice. The issues of developing professional skills and competencies among preschool education specialists have been reflected in the research of CIS scholars such as Arushanova, Bakina, and Bern, R.S. Bure, A.A. Verbitskiy, M.I. Dyachenko, N.D. Levitov, Y.A. Klimov, K.K. Platonov, L.A. Kandibovich, N.V. Kuzmina Markova, V.A. Krutetskiy, L.M. Mitina, N.F. Talizina and others. The problems of forming professional skills and readiness for professional activity among preschool education staff have also been studied by foreign scholars, including A. Bandura, A.S. Belkin, J. Chen, C. Chang, A. Gagnon, C.C. Johnston, S.H. Landry, G.V. Caprara, S. Kruger, V.B. Kosminskaya, V.K. Kotirlo, A. Maslow, M. Montessori, C. Rogers, J. Piaget, J. Rennis and others ([Bandura, 1997](#); [Caprara, Barbaranelli, Pastorelli, Bandura, & Zimbardo, 2000](#); [Johnston, 2015](#)).

The scientific novelty of the research lies in the following: since learning motives influence responsibility and independence, while creative thinking fosters initiative and goal orientation in the process of developing professional skills of future preschool education staff, it has been substantiated that the integrative development of suggestive abilities with volitional qualities is an important psychological factor; as the professional skills of future preschool education staff must be manifested in working with children and their parents through activity- and people-oriented approaches in harmony with empathy, the integral formation of “hard” and “self” skills depending on sociability and social activity has been justified ([Blömeke et al., 2017](#)). The dynamic development of professional skills in future preschool education staff has been proven to be conditioned by professional motivation within the process of interpersonal influence, strongly linked to communicative abilities and creative thinking, and determined by gnostic and emotional values in pedagogical activities. Furthermore, it has been substantiated that to form professional skills, it is necessary to strengthen the influence of cognitive, emotional, and motivational factors that ensure the manifestation of professional position; therefore, the development of flexible thinking, positivity in communication, and the ability to understand others' emotions associated with the localization of volitional strength are essential ([Mondj, Giovanelli, & Reynolds, 2021](#); [Tilbe & Xiaosong, 2024](#)).

In addition to the previously highlighted determinants, it is important to consider the role of cultural competence in the professional development of preschool education staff. In today's increasingly multicultural societies, educators are often required to interact with children and families from diverse cultural, linguistic and religious backgrounds. The ability to demonstrate cultural sensitivity, respect for diversity, and intercultural communication skills is an essential aspect of professional preparedness. Teachers who can adapt their pedagogical approaches to accommodate different cultural perspectives not only foster inclusivity but also contribute to the holistic development of children in diverse learning environments. This makes cultural competence an emerging psychological determinant that complements empathy, social adaptability, and communicative competence ([S.-Y. Lin, Ho, & Chung, 2025](#); [Porterfield & Scott-Little, 2019](#)). Moreover, the integration of digital pedagogy into preschool education requires future specialists to acquire not only technical proficiency but also the psychological readiness to embrace innovation. Digital storytelling, interactive educational platforms, and gamified learning environments are now part of many preschool programs worldwide. Educators with strong creative thinking and openness to change are more successful in

utilizing these tools to enhance children's engagement and learning outcomes. Resistance to digital transformation, on the other hand, often stems from fear of failure or lack of confidence, underscoring the importance of strengthening self-efficacy and adaptability as psychological resources. Therefore, the digital dimension of pedagogy introduces new demands on teachers' professional identities and requires the inclusion of digital literacy as a component of both hard and self skills ([Gita, Ferede, & Tondeur, 2025](#); [Sung & Lee, 2025](#); [Yang & Rahman, 2025](#)).

Another significant aspect is the ethical responsibility of preschool educators. Professional skills are measured not only by technical effectiveness but also by adherence to ethical principles such as fairness, respect, integrity, and care for children's rights. The psychological determinants of moral reasoning, empathy, and responsibility directly shape teachers' responses to ethical dilemmas in their daily practice. For example, decisions regarding discipline, inclusivity, or conflict resolution often require educators to balance institutional expectations with individual child needs ([Arda Tuncdemir, Burroughs, & Moore, 2022](#); [Skoglund, Ye, & Jiang 2022](#)). The integration of ethical awareness into professional development strengthens teachers' ability to act responsibly and reinforces public trust in the preschool educational system. Furthermore, professional growth in preschool education is inseparable from Continuous Professional Development (CPD).

Lifelong learning is a necessity in an era in which educational paradigms are rapidly evolving. Psychological determinants, such as intrinsic motivation, curiosity, and self-regulation, are essential for sustaining engagement with ongoing training, workshops, and peer learning communities. As discussed earlier, reflective practice serves as a bridge to Continuous Professional Development (CPD) by encouraging teachers to critically evaluate their experiences and remain open to feedback. This reflective orientation not only enhances professional skills but also ensures adaptability to new pedagogical standards and societal expectations ([Lin et al., 2025](#); [Skoglund et al., 2022](#)). The relevance of teamwork and collaborative learning should be emphasized. Preschool education is inherently collaborative, involving close interactions with colleagues, parents, and community organizations.

The ability to work effectively in a team requires emotional intelligence, patience, and strong communication skills. Collaborative environments not only reduce professional isolation but also promote the exchange of best practices and innovation. Therefore, fostering teamwork skills in teacher education programs is critical for preparing preschool staff for the realities of professional practice. Finally, the psychological well-being of educators should be regarded as both a determinant and an outcome of professional skills development. Chronic stress, burnout, and emotional exhaustion can undermine the effectiveness of even the most skilled teachers in the classroom. Hence, developing coping strategies, resilience, and mindfulness practices is vital to maintaining long-term professional competence. Institutions must also recognize their responsibility to support teachers' mental health by creating positive organizational cultures, providing counseling resources, and ensuring manageable workloads. When educators are psychologically supported, their ability to cultivate positive learning environments and demonstrate professional skills is significantly enhanced ([Byun & Jeon, 2023](#)).

In conclusion, the development of professional skills among future preschool education staff is not a static or isolated process but a dynamic interaction between personal qualities, psychological determinants, and sociocultural conditions. By considering emerging factors such as cultural competence, digital pedagogy, ethical responsibility, continuous learning, teamwork, and psychological well-being, the framework of professional readiness becomes increasingly comprehensive. These elements ensure that preschool educators are not only technically competent but also emotionally resilient, ethically grounded, culturally adaptive, and innovative in addressing contemporary education challenges.

2. Literature Review

The issue of developing professional skills among preschool education staff has been widely addressed in research by both domestic and foreign scholars. In the CIS, the works of Arushanova, Bakina, and Bakhshieva Bern, R. S. Bure, A.A. Verbitskiy, M.I. Dyachenko, N.D. Levitov, Y.A. Klimov, K.K. Platonov, L.A. Kandibovich, N.V. Kuzmina Markova, V.A. Krutetskiy, L.M. Mitina,

N.F. Talizina et al. emphasized the psychological and pedagogical foundations of professional skill formation. Their studies highlight the role of motivational factors, the integration of knowledge with practice, and the influence of psychological determinants on the development of professional competencies. Foreign scholars such as Bandura (social cognitive theory), Maslow (hierarchy of needs), and C. Rogers (humanistic psychology), Piaget (cognitive development theory), M. Montessori (child-centered development model), and J. Chen, C. Chang, C.C. Johnston, S.H. Landry, and G.V. Caprara has extensively studied the impact of motivation, creativity, and empathy on the professional development of preschool education staff. For instance, Bandura concept of self-efficacy reveals the decisive role of motivation and self-confidence in professional practice, while Rogers' humanistic approach underscores the significance of interpersonal relations, communication, and empathy in the educational process ([Klimov, 2005](#); [Kuzmina, 2002](#)).

Recent international studies have increasingly focused on developing educators' communicative competence and emotional intelligence. D. Goleman emotional intelligence framework highlights the importance of managing one's emotions and understanding others' feelings as key factors in effective interaction with children and parents in preschool education. This perspective further emphasizes the critical role of psychological determinants in the development of professional skills. The literature also indicates that factors such as learning motivation, volitional qualities, flexibility of thinking, creativity, communication culture, and social activity exert an integrative influence on professional skill development. Researchers argue that the dynamic nature of professional competencies is shaped by both gnostic (cognitive) and emotional values in pedagogical practice. In summary, the analysis of the existing literature demonstrates that the formation of professional skills among future preschool education staff is grounded in a wide range of psychological determinants. Their scientific justification contributes not only to the effectiveness of pedagogical practice but also to improving the quality of education and ensuring the holistic development of children ([Maslow, 1970](#); [Montessori, 1967](#)).

Building on these foundations, it is essential to note that the development of professional skills in preschool education is not limited to the traditional dimensions of motivation, creativity, and empathy. Contemporary research increasingly emphasizes the importance of emotional resilience, cultural adaptability, reflective practice, and digital competence as integral aspects of teacher training. Although these dimensions are relatively new to pedagogical discourse, they significantly influence how educators engage with children, colleagues, and parents, thereby shaping the overall quality of preschool education. One area that deserves particular attention is the role of emotional resilience. Preschool educators often operate in environments characterized by high emotional demands, including managing children's diverse behaviors, addressing parental expectations, and responding to institutional requirements. Studies indicate that educators who demonstrate strong resilience and emotional regulation are better equipped to handle stress and avoid burnout, ensuring continuity in their professional competence. Resilience not only helps maintain personal well-being but also translates into improved classroom management and more effective pedagogical practices. Therefore, emotional resilience can be regarded as both a determinant and an outcome of professional skill development ([Sobirovich, 2024](#); [Sobirovich & Elmuratovna, 2025](#)).

A closely related construct is Emotional Intelligence (EI), which extends beyond empathy to encompass self-awareness, self-regulation, social awareness, and relationship management. [Goleman's \(2005\)](#) argued that EI is a stronger predictor of professional success than cognitive intelligence in fields requiring intensive human interaction, such as teaching. In preschool education, where communication with young children demands patience, understanding, and sensitivity, EI is a decisive factor. Educators with high EI are more likely to build trusting relationships with children, identify their emotional needs, and provide supportive learning environments for them. Recent meta-analyses confirm that EI training can significantly enhance teacher effectiveness, underscoring the need to integrate EI development into teacher education curricula.

Another important perspective is the concept of cultural competence. In increasingly multicultural societies, preschool educators frequently interact with children and families from diverse cultural, linguistic, and religious backgrounds. Cultural competence involves the ability to understand, respect,

and adapt to differences, thereby fostering inclusivity in education. It highlights that culturally responsive teaching not only improves children's academic outcomes but also enhances their social development and sense of belonging. For preschool educators, this competence is intertwined with psychological determinants such as empathy, flexibility, and openness to new experiences. Culturally competent educators are more effective in reducing educational inequality and supporting holistic child development ([Turdiev, 2024](#)).

In parallel, the growing role of digital pedagogy cannot be overlooked in this context. With the rapid introduction of digital technologies in early childhood education, future preschool staff must develop not only technical skills but also psychological readiness to embrace innovation. Digital competence requires creativity, adaptability, and confidence in using digital tools to design interactive and engaging learning environments that facilitate learning. [Aldhafeeri, Palaiologou, and Folorunsho \(2016\)](#) emphasize that digital literacy in preschool education goes beyond technical proficiency; it involves the ability to critically evaluate digital resources, integrate them into pedagogical goals, and use them to support social and cognitive development. The adoption of digital tools has been shown to enhance children's engagement, support differentiated instruction, and promote collaboration between teachers and parents. Resistance to technological change, often rooted in low self-efficacy, highlights the importance of strengthening psychological determinants such as motivation, openness, and adaptability ([Gabarda Méndez, Marín Suelves, Esteve, & Ramón-Llin, 2023](#); [Su & Yang, 2023](#)).

Beyond digital competence, the literature also highlights the significance of reflective practice as a driver of professional growth. The concept of the reflective practitioner underscores the need for educators to critically analyze their experiences, question their assumptions, and adapt their strategies. Reflective practice fosters metacognition, enabling educators to become more self-aware and proactive in addressing the challenges they face. In the context of preschool education, reflective practitioners demonstrate greater adaptability, creativity, and resilience, which are indispensable qualities in rapidly changing educational environments. Embedding reflective activities, such as journaling, peer discussions, and supervision, into teacher training programs significantly enhances the formation of professional skills.

The development of professional skills is also linked to professional identity formation, which reflects how educators perceive their roles, internalize professional values, and align their personal goals with institutional expectations. Professional identity is not static; it evolves throughout one's career and is influenced by both external demands and internal psychological resources. A strong professional identity fosters motivation, commitment, and a sense of purpose, which, in turn, enhances the acquisition of professional skills ([Syafrizal, Wibisono, & Nurhatisyah, 2024](#)). Conversely, a fragmented or weak identity may lead to role conflict, decreased job satisfaction, and reduced effectiveness. Supportive institutional environments play a crucial role in shaping positive professional identities, thereby contributing to sustainable professional growth ([Akaba, Peters, Liang, & Graves, 2022](#); [Olsen, Kjær, & Spieler, 2024](#)).

Moreover, the concept of collaborative competence has gained prominence in recent years. Preschool education is inherently collaborative and involves close interactions with colleagues, parents, and community stakeholders. Effective collaboration requires not only technical skills but also psychological qualities, such as trust, empathy, conflict resolution abilities, and communicative competence. Demonstrates that collaborative professional cultures enhance teacher learning, innovation and resilience. For preschool educators, who often work in teams to design and implement child-centered activities, collaborative competence ensures that professional skills are not developed in isolation but in a supportive and interactive environment. Simultaneously, the importance of lifelong learning and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) has been increasingly emphasized in both theory and practice. In the 21st century, where educational paradigms are rapidly evolving, preschool educators must remain open to new knowledge, methods and technologies. Lifelong learning requires psychological determinants such as curiosity, intrinsic motivation and self-regulation ([Konjala & Wulansari, 2024](#)).

Educators who adopt a lifelong learning orientation demonstrate greater adaptability and innovation in their practices. Continuous Professional Development (CPD) opportunities, when aligned with educators' motivational and cognitive profiles, significantly contribute to the sustained development of professional skills ([Indra, Wibisono, & Indrawan, 2024](#)). An equally important theme in contemporary literature is the role of well-being and stress management in developing professional competence. Preschool educators often experience high stress levels due to their workload, emotional demands, and administrative responsibilities. Prolonged stress without adequate coping strategies can lead to burnout, undermining professional skills and diminishing the quality of education provided. Research on teacher well-being [Liu, Hedges, and Cooper \(2024\)](#) indicates that stress management, mindfulness, and self-care practices directly influence teachers' professional performance and satisfaction. Institutions that support educators' psychological well-being—through positive organizational cultures, counseling resources, and reasonable workloads—play a decisive role in sustaining professional competence among educators.

The significance of volitional qualities in professional skill development remains a recurring theme in the literature. Qualities such as perseverance, responsibility, and self-discipline mediate the relationship between motivation and skill acquisition. Volitional regulation allows educators to maintain their focus, overcome obstacles, and achieve long-term goals. In preschool education, where challenges are frequent and unpredictable, volitional strength ensures stability and consistency in the pedagogical practice. Integrating volitional training into teacher preparation can reinforce the psychological foundations of professional skill development. Additionally, emerging interdisciplinary research has begun exploring neuroscientific perspectives on professional learning. Advances in cognitive neuroscience have revealed how brain plasticity, attention regulation, and emotional processing influence the acquisition of professional skills. Emotions are inseparable from cognitive processes, which means that effective professional training must address both cognitive and affective dimensions. For preschool educators, this implies that training programs should not only focus on knowledge and skills but also on emotional experiences and their effects on learning. Neuroscientific insights can therefore enrich the understanding of psychological determinants and provide evidence-based strategies for enhancing teacher training ([Maharani, Yahya, Putra, & Pramono, 2025](#); [Putri & Etikariena, 2022](#)).

Cross-cultural comparative studies also provide valuable insights into how societal norms and institutional frameworks shape professional skills. For instance, research in collectivist cultures highlights the emphasis on empathy, harmony, and cooperation, whereas individualistic cultures prioritize independence, creativity, and initiative ([Novi & Etikariena, 2022](#)). These findings confirm that the psychological determinants of professional skill development are context-dependent and influenced by cultural values and expectations. Cultural adaptability is a critical competence for future preschool education staff, enabling them to operate effectively in diverse educational settings. Finally, the literature on policy and institutional support underscores that professional skill development cannot be viewed solely as an individual responsibility. Institutional structures, curricula, and policies play vital roles in shaping the opportunities available for skill acquisition. Effective teacher-education systems are characterized by coherence, strong mentorship, and alignment between theoretical training and practical experience. Without supportive institutional environments, even the most motivated and capable educators may struggle to fully develop their professional potential. Therefore, policies that prioritize teacher development, provide resources for CPD, and foster positive school climates are essential for ensuring the holistic growth of preschool educators ([Andiyanto & Hariri, 2022](#); [Fitrianingrum, Aminin, & Riyanto, 2022](#)).

In conclusion, the literature demonstrates that the development of professional skills among preschool education staff is a multidimensional, dynamic process. While traditional determinants such as motivation, creativity, and empathy remain central, contemporary research highlights additional factors, including resilience, emotional intelligence, cultural competence, digital literacy, reflective practice, professional identity, collaboration, lifelong learning, stress management, volitional qualities, neuroscientific insights, and policy support. Together, these determinants form an integrated framework that reflects the complexity of professional development in preschool education settings.

Their scientific and practical significance lies in their potential to inform teacher-training programs, enhance pedagogical practices, and ultimately contribute to the holistic development of children in modern societies.

3. Methodology

The methodological basis of this research is founded on a combination of psychological, pedagogical, and sociological approaches that allow for a comprehensive analysis of the determinants influencing the development of professional skills in future preschool education staff. The study relies on the principles of systematization, integration, and interdisciplinarity, as the phenomenon of professional skill formation cannot be adequately explained within a single discipline's framework.

3.1 Research Design and Approach

A mixed-method design was employed that integrated both qualitative and quantitative methods. The qualitative component focused on identifying the subjective experiences, motivational orientations, and self-reflections of students preparing to become preschool educators in the program. In-depth interviews, narrative analysis, and case studies were used to capture the personal dimensions of this professional growth. The quantitative component, on the other hand, included surveys, psychometric testing, and experimental procedures aimed at measuring psychological determinants such as motivation, emotional intelligence, communicative competence, and creative thinking ([Wa, Desriyantika, Hasbullah, Et, & Indrianni, 2025](#)).

3.2 Sample

The research sample comprised undergraduate and graduate students specializing in preschool education at higher education institutions. In addition, practicing preschool teachers were included as a comparative group to trace the developmental dynamics of professional skills across different professionalization stages. The sample was diverse in terms of gender, age, and academic background, ensuring the results' validity and reliability.

3.3 Instruments and Measures

Several diagnostic tools were used in this research.

1. Motivational profiles were assessed using adapted versions of A. Maslow's hierarchy of needs framework and Bandura's self-efficacy scales.
2. Emotional intelligence was measured according to D. Goleman's EI model, focusing on self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and social skills.
3. Communicative competence was evaluated using standardized interactional role-play scenarios and questionnaires that assessed verbal and nonverbal communication skills.
4. Creativity and flexible thinking were analyzed using the Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking and modified tasks requiring problem-solving and originality.

3.4 Data Analysis

The collected data were processed using statistical methods, including correlation, regression, and factor analyses, to identify the relationship between psychological determinants and the formation of professional skills. Qualitative data were coded and thematically analyzed, allowing for triangulation of findings and deeper interpretation of the phenomenon under study.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

All participants were informed of the research objectives, and voluntary participation was ensured by the researchers. Ethical principles of confidentiality, respect for personal data, and non-harm were strictly adhered to in this study.

4. Results and Discussions

The findings of this study reveal that the development of professional skills in future preschool education staff is a multidimensional process influenced by a wide range of psychological determinants. Motivation has emerged as one of the strongest predictors of professional readiness.

Students with high intrinsic motivation, driven by interest in child development and pedagogical creativity, demonstrate greater levels of initiative, independence, and responsibility. This supports the theoretical assumptions of Bandura social cognitive theory, which emphasizes the role of self-efficacy in shaping behavior and performance. Another significant determinant identified was emotional intelligence, which played a central role in the quality of communication and ability to establish empathetic relationships with children and their parents. Teachers and students with higher emotional awareness and regulation are more effective in conflict resolution, fostering trust, and creating supportive learning environments. These results align with Goleman framework, reinforcing the necessity of integrating emotional training into the preparation of preschool educators in China/

The role of creative thinking and cognitive flexibility has also been highlighted in the literature. Participants who demonstrated high levels of creativity were more adaptive in responding to unexpected challenges in pedagogical practice and showed greater innovation in instructional strategies. This finding resonates with Piaget theory of cognitive development, which views thought flexibility as an essential element of problem-solving and adaptation in dynamic educational contexts. Furthermore, the study confirmed that communicative competence serves as a bridge between professional knowledge and its practical application. Effective communication skills are not limited to verbal interaction but also encompass nonverbal expressions, active listening, and the ability to interpret children's emotional states. These skills, when combined with empathy, form an integrative model of “hard” and “self-skills” that ensure holistic professional development.

An important dimension of the discussion concerns the integration of personal qualities and professional skills. Responsibility, independence, initiative, and social activity were not simply additional attributes; they acted as mediators in the process of skill formation. The interplay between volitional qualities and suggestive abilities creates a strong psychological foundation for professional resilience. The research also highlights the dynamic nature of professional skill development. It is not a linear process but rather a dialectical one, shaped by continuous interaction between external educational requirements and internal psychological resources of the students. Professional motivation, reinforced by interpersonal influences, intensifies communicative abilities and creativity, thereby enhancing pedagogical effectiveness.

Finally, the findings underscore the necessity of strengthening cognitive, emotional, and motivational factors to cultivate professional skills among future preschool education staff. The development of flexible thinking, positivity in communication, and the capacity to understand others' emotions have been proven to be directly related to the localization of volitional strength. This suggests that psychological determinants should not be considered separate variables but rather as interconnected components of an integrated developmental system. The development of professional skills among future preschool education staff is influenced not only by individual psychological traits but also by the broader sociocultural environment in which educators are trained and work. Cross-cultural studies indicate that cultural norms and societal expectations play a decisive role in shaping the qualities required of preschool teachers in different countries.

In collectivist contexts, interpersonal harmony, empathy, and collaborative behavior are emphasized, whereas in more individualistic societies, creativity, independence, and initiative are more highly valued. This illustrates that the psychological determinants of professional growth are not universal but are deeply embedded within the cultural and institutional frameworks of education. Another important aspect of modern times is the impact of digitalization on early childhood education. The rapid introduction of digital technologies has reshaped teaching practices, requiring educators to develop digital literacy, adaptability, and creativity as part of their professional skill set. Teachers with strong cognitive flexibility and openness to innovation tend to integrate digital tools more effectively, whereas resistance to change often hampers their professional development. Thus, adaptability and readiness for technological transformation have become new psychological determinants of professionalism.

Professional resilience and stress management are crucial for sustaining long-term effectiveness. The preschool environment is emotionally demanding because educators must balance the diverse needs of

children, parental expectations, and administrative requirements. Research on teacher burnout confirms that stress management, psychological well-being, and positive coping strategies directly influence the stability of professional competence. Educators with higher resilience, mindfulness, and emotional self-regulation maintain higher levels of professional performance and satisfaction. Equally significant is the formation of a professional identity. Professional identity is shaped by how educators perceive their roles, internalize professional values, and align their personal goals with institutional expectations. A well-established professional identity fosters stronger motivation, higher commitment, and continuous pursuit of professional excellence. In contrast, a weak or fragmented identity may result in role conflict and reduced job performance. Alongside identity, collaborative competence is indispensable, as preschool education requires teamwork and cooperation among colleagues, parents, and the community. Effective communication, trust, and conflict resolution skills contribute to collective success and enhance individual professional development.

Reflective practice is another determinant of long-term growth. The ability to critically analyze one's experiences, evaluate decisions, and reconsider teaching methods enables educators to develop self-awareness and metacognitive skills. Those who consistently practice reflection, whether through journaling, peer discussions, or self-assessment, demonstrate faster professional growth and greater adaptability to changing educational conditions. This practice fosters lifelong learning, which is essential in rapidly evolving fields. Integrating psychological theories into teacher training further enriches the skill development process. Constructivist theories emphasize the active and social nature of learning; humanistic approaches highlight empathy, self-actualization, and personal growth; and behaviorist and social-cognitive frameworks underline the importance of reinforcement, modeling, and observation. When combined, these perspectives provide a holistic framework for developing teacher-training programs that cultivate both technical skills and psychological resources.

Looking to the future, research in this area must expand in several directions. Longitudinal studies are needed to trace how psychological determinants evolve throughout the professional trajectory of preschool education teachers. Neuroscientific approaches can also offer insights into the brain-based mechanisms underlying professional learning and adaptation. Cross-national comparative studies would reveal differences and similarities across education systems, highlighting how cultural and institutional factors shape skill development. In addition, gender-related issues should be examined, given that preschool education remains predominantly female in many societies, which raises questions about gendered expectations and their influence on professional identity and skills. In summary, the process of professional skill formation among future preschool education staff is multifaceted, context-dependent, and dynamic. It involves not only knowledge acquisition but also the integration of motivation, emotional intelligence, creativity, resilience, reflective practice and socio-cultural adaptation. These psychological determinants provide the foundation for effective professional readiness and ensure that preschool educators can respond to the complex challenges of contemporary education.

5. Conclusions

5.1 Conclusion

The conducted research provides comprehensive insights into the psychological determinants of developing professional skills among future preschool-education staff. The results confirm that professional growth in preschool educators is not limited to the acquisition of theoretical knowledge or technical expertise but is deeply rooted in motivational, cognitive, emotional, and communicative factors. The study demonstrates that motivation plays a decisive role in shaping responsibility, independence, and readiness for professional activity, while creative thinking enhances initiative, innovation, and goal-orientation. Emotional intelligence, particularly empathy and self-regulation, is essential for building effective relationships with children and their parents, fostering trust, and ensuring a supportive learning environment. Communicative competence has emerged as a critical bridge between knowledge and practice, enabling educators to effectively convey information, interpret nonverbal cues, and adapt to diverse social contexts. The integration of “hard skills” and “self-skills” provides a balanced model of professional preparedness, ensuring that preschool teachers can effectively combine technical proficiency with human-centered qualities.

The findings also reveal that the formation of professional skills in preschool education staff is a dynamic and multidimensional process conditioned by both external educational requirements and internal psychological resources. The synergy between volitional qualities, personal attributes, and suggestive abilities fosters resilience and adaptability in the professional practice. Furthermore, this study underscores the importance of strengthening cognitive, motivational, and emotional determinants, as they directly contribute to the development of flexible thinking, positive communication, and the capacity to understand others' emotions. Overall, the study highlights that the effectiveness of preschool education depends largely on the holistic development of the staff. Integrating psychological determinants into teacher training programs can enhance professional readiness, improve pedagogical practices, and ultimately contribute to the well-rounded development of children. Thus, the findings have both theoretical and practical implications, offering valuable recommendations for policymakers, educators, and researchers aiming to improve the quality of preschool education and teacher preparation systems.

5.2 Research Limitations

Despite providing valuable insights into the psychological determinants of professional skill development among future preschool education staff, this study has several limitations. First, the research primarily focuses on conceptual and psychological factors, which may limit the generalization of the findings to broader educational contexts. Second, although the study applies a mixed-method approach, including interviews, surveys, psychometric assessments, and experimental procedures, the findings are influenced by the characteristics of the selected participants and educational settings. Third, the study does not extensively examine how institutional, cultural, and policy-related factors interact with individual psychological determinants in shaping professional competencies. Future research should consider longitudinal and cross-cultural studies involving larger and more diverse samples to validate these determinants and explore their development across different educational environments.

5.3 Suggestions and Directions for Future Research

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations can be made to strengthen the development of professional skills among future preschool education staff. First, teacher training institutions should place greater emphasis on integrating psychological determinants into their curricula. This requires not only the transfer of theoretical knowledge but also the creation of environments that foster motivation, emotional intelligence and communicative competence. Training modules that include reflective practices, role-playing, and simulation of classroom scenarios will allow future educators to develop flexibility in thinking and readiness for real pedagogical challenges. Second, policy makers and educational authorities are encouraged to design and implement professional development programs that address both “hard skills” and “self-skills.” Continuous Professional Development (CPD) opportunities should be tailored to enhance resilience, empathy, and creative thinking, while also ensuring mastery of modern teaching methodologies. Special attention must be given to supporting teachers in adapting to digital innovations, as preschool education increasingly relies on technology-assisted learning.

Third, schools and preschool institutions should prioritize creating supportive organizational cultures. Mentorship programs, peer collaboration, and professional communities of practice can strengthen teamwork and help novice educators transition more smoothly into their professional roles. Institutions should also provide psychological support and resources for stress management, recognizing that teachers' well-being is directly linked to the quality of education provided to children. Finally, future researchers should expand the conceptual framework of this study by conducting empirical investigations using longitudinal and cross-cultural approaches. This would provide deeper insights into how motivational, cognitive, emotional, and communicative factors interact in different educational contexts and cultural settings. Such studies will enrich the theoretical foundation of preschool education and guide the development of more effective teacher-training policies and practices. In summary, a comprehensive and systemic approach that combines educational policy, institutional support, and individual development is crucial for fostering highly competent and resilient preschool educators.

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