Oral Defense Announcement
University of Missouri – St. Louis Graduate School

An oral examination in defense of the dissertation for the degree
Doctor of Education with an emphasis in Educational Practice

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Being a Teacher: A Case Study on Student Teacher Professional Identity Construction During the Education Practicum in a Chinese Normal University

Date: July 22, 2021
Time: 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Place: Remote

Abstract
Previous studies have presented a clear link between teachers’ professional identity construction and teacher effectiveness and have considered the teacher professional identity as a pivotal factor to teachers’ effectiveness, decision-making on the career, commitment, as well as professional development (Beijaard et al., 2004; Day et al., 2005; Lasky, 2005; Wang, 2020). Positive experiences in terms of teacher professional identity construction during education practicum further promoted student teachers’ professional commitment, specifically, their belief in the teaching profession (Hong, 2010; Zhao, 2013). This case study examined teacher professional identity construction among student teachers of a normal university in China during their education practicum. Guided by a synthesized theoretical framework of three sociocultural theories for understanding teacher professional identity construction (Davies & Harre, 1990; Engeström, 2015; Lave & Wenger, 1991), this study focused on two overarching research questions: 1. What is the status of the Chinese student teachers’ professional identity construction during the education practicum?, and 2. How do the Chinese student teachers construct their teacher professional identity during the education practicum?

This case study adopted a mixed-methods sequential explanatory design (Creswell, 2012) to explore the process of Chinese student teachers’ professional identity construction through examining their education practicum experiences. The participants are senior students who have completed 12-weeks education practicum at the assigned placement schools. The data included 275 questionnaires, six focus group interview transcripts with 13 student teachers and 51 education practicum reports.

The findings from this study showed that within placement school context, student teachers constructed a high level of student teacher professional identity during education practicum. Student teachers constructed teacher professional identity by forming an understanding of the teaching profession, gaining teacher knowledge, interacting with people and acting as role models and classroom managers. This study provides certain insight into some of the similarities in the ways in which student teachers construct their teacher professional identity during their education practicum. The findings of this study enriched the literature on student teacher professional identity construction.

Defense of Dissertation Committee
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