



Current situation of teachers at early childhood schools in Ninh Keu district, Can Tho province

Mai Thi Yen Lan

Can Tho University, Can Tho, Vietnam

Abstract

The aim of the paper is to provide scientific, accurate, and comprehensive overview of teachers at early childhood schools in Ninh Keu district, Can Tho province. This paper utilised sociological investigation methods and interview to improve our understanding of the current situation regarding the number of teachers, qualifications, professional capacities, professional competence, emulation outcomes, structures (age, seniority, gender), and quality (politics, morality, lifestyle, professional knowledge, pedagogical skills, fostering specialty and profession). The results of the findings draw our attention to the importance of considering the solutions to promote teacher quality at early childhood schools in the Ninh Keu district, Can Tho Province.

Keywords: teachers, early childhood schools, Ninh Keu district, Can Tho

Introduction

During the Doi Moi (Renovation) period, both the education systems in Can Tho city and Ninh Keu district has improved. Both the city and the district have expanded school networks, improved facilities, increased the number of schools that meet national standards, and improved the quality of teachers, particularly those who teach in early childhood schools. However, in Ninh Keu district, Can Tho city, there are some early childhood institutions that have difficulties that lead to low educational quality. This is caused by the fact that the teachers, particularly those who teach at early childhood schools, don't meet the requirements of the education renovation. In fact, in many schools, evaluation results and annual early childhood teacher ratings display the small proportion of teachers who have low quality and professional capabilities, which doesn't meet the demand to enhance teaching quality these days. This is the consequence of difficulties and inadequacies in stages such as seeking, training, selecting, arranging, using, cultivating, and self-studying, especially for young teachers who have just graduated. In order to promote the quality of early childhood teachers that meets the prescribed criteria for the number and quality, we need

to have an accurate and comprehensive overview of the current situation of teachers in the new age. Due to the aforementioned issue, I conducted research on: "current situation of teachers at early childhood schools in Ninh Keu district, Can Tho province."

The paper aims to provide scientific, accurate, and comprehensive overview of teachers at early childhood schools in Ninh Keu district, Can Tho province. Education administrators can utilize the results of the findings as a reference to address the solutions for promoting the quality of early childhood teachers that meet the standards in accordance with regulations.

Material and Methods

The research utilized the following methods: questionnaires, interview, summarizing experience, and statistics.

Survey participants: Principals and vice principals of early childhood schools: 40 people; teachers of 20 lower secondary schools: 220 people.

The survey was conducted in March 2019

Results

The number of teachers (Table 1)

Table 1: Statistics on the number of teachers at early childhood schools in Ninh Kieu district, Can Tho city

Academic-year	Classroom		Student	Teacher	Ratio of teacher/classroom	Surplus(+) shortage (-) (compared to the norm of 1.2)
	Tổng số	Semi-boarding				
2016-2017	112	112	6.734	224	2	-
2017-2018	213	213	7.042	484	2	+
2018-2019	223	223	7.146	470	2	-

(Source: Office of Education and Training of Ninh Kieu District)

Table 1 indicates that some early childhood schools lack teachers. According to Joint Circular No. 06/2015/TTLT-BGDĐT-BNV dated March 16, 2015 of the Ministry of Education and Training and the Ministry of Home Affairs stipulated employment positions and employee numbers at public early childhood education institutions (1,2 teachers/class for teaching 1 season/day, 1,5 teachers/class

for 2 seasons/day, and 2,2 teachers/class for boarding school). Therefore, compared to the norm of teacher number, the district lacks a large number of teachers because there are a lot of retired teachers based on regime. In this period, early childhood schools plan to meet national standards in accordance with the roadmap, so they have to teach 100% of classes with 2 seasons/day, 100% of day

boarders, and encourage children to come to kindergarten. Consequently, these schools need to recruit more early childhood teachers who have the qualities and professional capabilities that meet the factual requirements. The education sector and headmasters set main tasks in the

process of building plans in the previous school years to seek training solutions, recruit more teachers, and develop teachers in upcoming times.

Level of specialty and profession (Table 2)

Table 2: Summary of level of specialty and profession of teachers at early childhood schools in Ninh Keu district, Can Tho City

Total	Training levels			Specialty and professional competence				Emulation classification		
	College, University	Technical School	Primary	Very Good	Good	Qualified	Unqualified	Emulative Soldier at the Grassroots Level	Progressive Laborer	Unclassified
484	360	124	0	316	123	45	0	40	444	0
%	74.4	25.6	0	65.3	25.4	9.3	0	8.3	91.7	

(Source: Office of Education and Training)

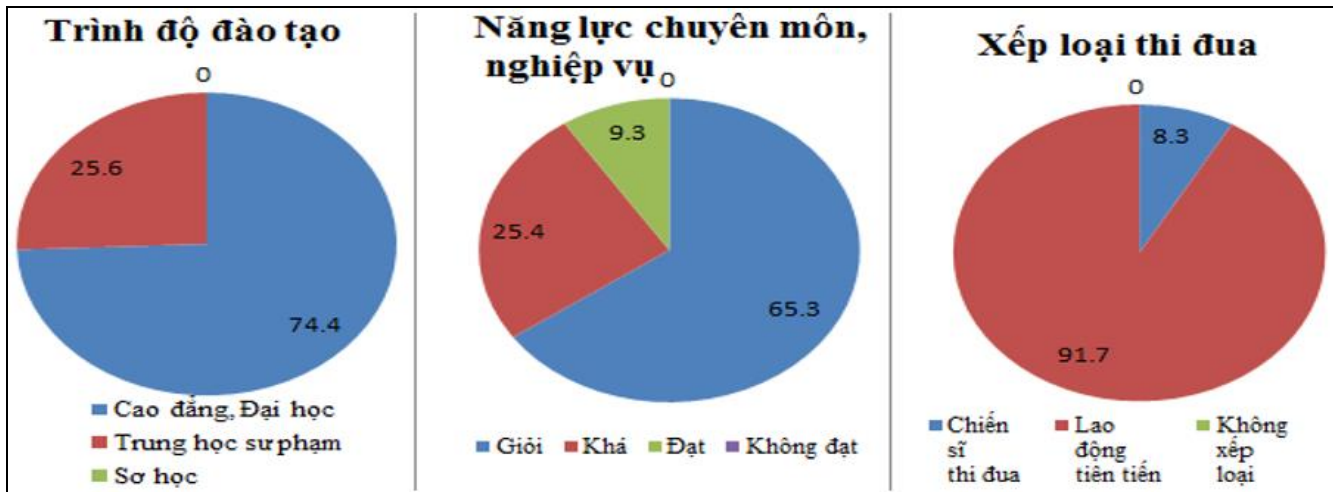


Fig 1: Summary of teachers’ level of specialty and profession.

Early childhood schools in Ninh Kieu district, Can Tho City.

- Training levels College, University Technical school Primary
- Specialty and professional competence Very good Good Qualified Unqualified
- Emulation classification Emulative Soldier at the Grassroots Level Progressive Laborer Unclassified

According to the data from table 2 and figure 1, in the district, there are a large number of early-childhood teachers who have good qualifications, comprising 100%. This means that teachers are willing to enhance their professional abilities and meet the renovative requirements of teaching and learning. In addition, 100% of the teachers have good professional competence, which meets the demands of teaching and educating children, showing that all teachers attempt to achieve good teaching results and ensure the educational goals in the district. Particularly, good-competence teachers account for 65%, indicating that the majority of teachers are eager to participate in movements, eager to teach and work, and are willing to drive the development of comprehensively educating children. Furthermore, teachers who achieve the honorable name “Lao Dong Tien Tien” (Progressive Laborer) comprise 85% of the total. However, the proportion of teachers who achieve the honorable name “Chien Si Thi Dua Cap Co So” (Emulative Soldier at the Grassroots Level) is not high, which only reaches 8.3%, and there are no teachers who achieve the criteria “Khong Xep Loi”(Unclassified). This means that, despite the difficulties in life, teachers still have a passion for their job and love children. Because of

that, in a matter of years in the Ninh Keu district, the process of training and cultivating early childhood teachers has stepped forward as the proportion of teachers who have been trained to meet the standard has increased and their professional capabilities are quite equivalent. After a matter of years, the process of training and cultivating early childhood children leads the education sector to be temporarily reassured by existing teachers. However, since early childhood schools lack a source of teachers these days, administrators (state administrators and sector administrators) have to worry and bother. In fact, when the quality of life has been increasingly enhanced, people’s demands have surged, such as sending children into nurseries and pre-primary schools for day-boarders.

Structures of Early Childhood Teachers

About the age

According to the statistics about the number of early childhood teachers from the 2016-2017 academic year to the 2018-2019 academic year, there is a great number of early childhood teachers who were recruited and under contract, indicating the high potential and development prospects of the preschool major. That is because teachers are young, healthy, dynamic, and creative. However, these teachers are still erroneous, superficial, impulsive, and inexperienced. In addition, elderly teachers make up a high proportion, meaning that they have experience of teaching, but they lack acumen. All of the mentioned factors have a relative impact on the quality of taking care of, nurturing, and educating early childhood children (relying on age psychology, conditions, and skills for caring for and educating children).

Table 3: Summary of early childhood teachers' age in Ninh Keu district for the academic year 2018-2019

under 30 years old		Between 30 and 45 years old		Over 45 years old	
Quantity	Rate (%)	Quantity	Rate (%)	Quantity	Rate (%)
30	6.2	394	81.4	60	12.4

(Source: real-life survey from early childhood education institutions)

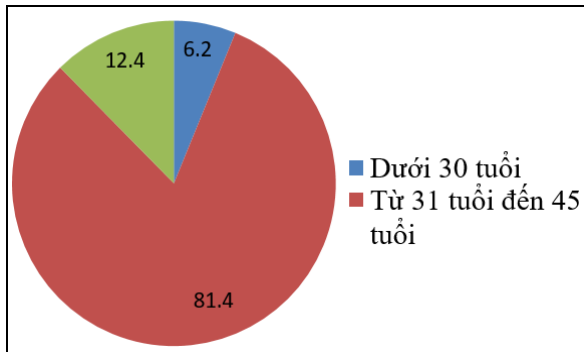


Fig 2: Summary of early childhood teachers' age in Ninh Keu for the academic year 2018-2019

Data summary Table and Chart 2 show that early childhood teachers under 30 years old comprised 6.2%. The group of teachers between 31 and 45 years old has the highest proportion (81, 4%). This group has a plentiful force with much experience in terms of both professional qualifications and pedagogy. This group has also been considered as a core team in the educational operation of schools, which is not only responsible for nurturing and educating children, but also acts as a team that can be trained as administrators at schools and engage in fostering young teachers. Furthermore, teachers over the age of 45 account for 12.4% of the total. In particular, the majority of them are of pensionable age, which is a great obstacle for the education sector as elderly teachers will be confronted with limitations such as nurturing and educating young children, and at the same time, schools cannot alter their position as this group is below the retirement age. This creates a professional gap, which has detrimental effects on the quality of nurturing and educating young children. This is the consequence of schools that recruit only a small percentage of young teachers who have healthy, dynamic, enterprising, self-affirming regarding quality and professional capabilities, while keeping elderly teachers who approximately reached the retirement age and have reduced professional capabilities. To tackle this issue, early childhood schools should build the long-term solutions for developing teachers appropriately in order to take the initiative when rolling out the tasks of training and fostering their teachers.

About teaching seniority

Table 4: Summary of early childhood teachers' seniority in Ninh Keu district for the academic year 2018-2019

teaching years	Quantity	Rate (%)
Under 5 years	12	2.5
Between 5 and 10 years	21	4.3
Between 11 and 20 years	399	82.4
Over 20 years	52	10.8

(Source: real-life survey from early childhood education institutions)

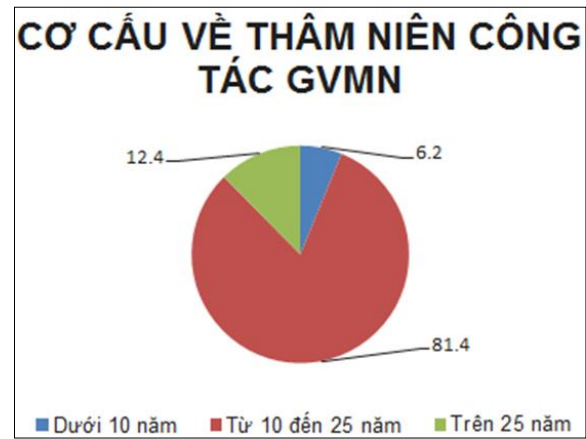


Fig 3: The structure of early childhood teachers' seniority in Ninh Keu district for the academic year 2018-2019

The structure of early childhood teachers' seniority

Under 10 years, between 10 and 25 years, over 25 years Teachers who have less than 5 years of teaching experience are certainly a young, healthy, enthusiastic, and ardent force. They can also easily access expertise, have a solid foundation in the field, be proficient at using state-of-the-art technologies in teaching, and meet social requirements. In addition, teachers who have teaching experience of between 5 and 10 years have been considered a core team and as an experienced, dynamic, enthusiastic, and essential force that has an immediate impact on the process of promoting the quality of fostering, nurturing, and educating children. Furthermore, there is a large proportion of teachers who have had 11 to 20 years of seniority. This group of teachers not only completes the assigned teaching tasks, but also assists schools in fostering new teachers. They have sufficient firm political support, are proficient in professional knowledge, and have the professional competence to meet the social requirements. However, this staff has some limitations in innovating the teaching approach, using advanced technology, and performing other teaching operations. Finally, teachers who have had more than 20 years of seniority are experienced forces and have sufficient firm political support, but when they roll out the process of innovating the teaching approach, the rate of innovational progress is often slow. They also have difficulties when fostering, nurturing, and educating children, and it seems that they tend to use fewer up-to-date technologies in the process of innovating education.

About genders

In particular, in the district, female teachers at early childhood schools reach 100% including 484 teachers and 58 education administrators. Some of them are under child-bearing age (below 40 years old), which reaches a quite high rate. Annually, they turn to taking maternity leave in succession, so this impacts on building the plans for fostering, nurturing, and educating children as well as completing academic year tasks in every school, such as having difficulty assigning tasks and attending other teaching activities.

The quality of teachers at early childhood schools in Ninh Keu district, Can Tho City

About political, moral, lifestyle qualities- professional knowledge- pedagogical skills

Teachers are evaluated on an annual basis by general

education institutions and early childhood education institutions using professional standards. Department of Education and Training of Ninh Keu district, Can Tho city

directs early childhood education institutions to evaluate the school’s closeness to reality using prescribed professional standards. The survey results are as follows:

Table 5: Summary of opinions of 202 officials and teachers evaluating the political, moral, and lifestyle qualities-professional knowledge-pedagogical skills of early childhood teachers

Content	Level assessment section							
	Very good		Good		Average		Poor	
	Quantity	%	Quantity	%	Quantity	%	Quantity	%
1. Requirements of political, moral, and lifestyle qualities	173	85.6	29	14.4	0	0	0	0
2. Requirements of professional knowledge	154	76.2	21	10.4	27	13.4	0	0
3. Requirements of pedagogical skills	120	59.4	74	36.6	8	4	0	0

(Source: real-life survey from 22 early childhood schools in Ninh Keu district)

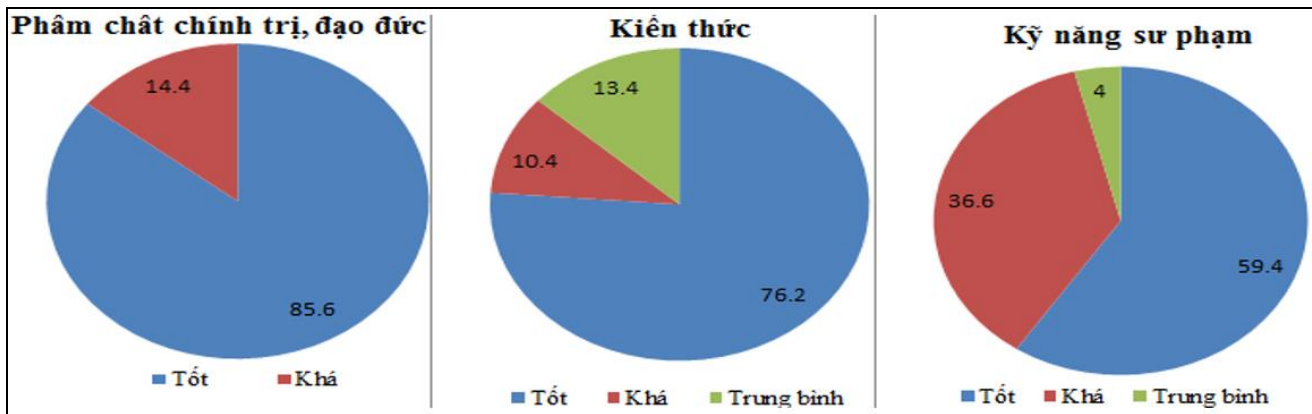


Fig 4: Rate of opinions of 202 officials and teachers evaluating the political, moral, and lifestyle qualities-professional knowledge-pedagogical skills of early childhood teachers

- Political, moral, and lifestyle qualities
- Very good, good
- Professional knowledge
- Very good, good, average
- Pedagogical skills
- Very good, good, average

Political, moral, and lifestyle qualities

Whatever profession necessitates professional ethics, the teaching profession dates back and has been regarded as one of the honorable professions, so society has placed a high value on the morality of teachers as an indicator of their worth. “We desire to train students as very moral people, so we need moral teachers to teach students,” said Ho Uncle. By carrying out the data obtained from a real-life survey at schools, as a whole, all teachers determine the political, moral, and lifestyle qualities as the core, important, and essential values of their teaching activities. They always maintain their position, have a strong revolutionary viewpoint, and strictly adhere to all state policies, government laws, and school regulations. They are highly motivated, have a will that overcomes all difficulties, and constantly contribute to the cause of education. In particular, there are 85,6% of teachers that are evaluated at a very good level and another 14,4% of teachers with good levels, despite the variable impacts of the market economy and integrated period that lead to the term “quy đổi”(in which everything seems to “convert”) and being misunderstood by the terms “educational service” and “credit-driven practice” of some schools. Yet, statistics and real-life surveys indicate that there is a small percentage of teachers with limited awareness. These staff do not really value the importance as well as the concern about practising political, ideal, moral, and lifestyle processes. These are likely to be negative

factors that have adverse impacts on the educational activities of schools. Thus, schools should pay attention and take early remedial measures in order to educate and shape the personalities of children to avoid deviation.

About professional knowledge

Statistics on early childhood teachers’ professional knowledge in the district reveal that there are 76,2% of teachers with highly specialized knowledge who meet the requirements of both the current education sector and schools (at a good and very good level). The majority of teachers grasp the fundamentals of preschool education and preschool-related knowledge, as well as how to teach, raise, and educate children and general preschool education knowledge. Despite the fact that all teachers are regularly trained, fostered, and self-cultivated through a variety of programs, some of them are unlikely to meet the standards set by the education sector. In particular, teachers who don’t meet the standards comprise 23,8% of the total. They are superficial, irresponsible, unconcerned about teaching and the general issues of the sector. This is an impediment to promoting the quality of fostering, nurturing, and educating children, as well as assisting them in learning life skills. Consequently, early childhood teachers consistently make an effort to grasp professional knowledge, which contributes to the achievements of this early childhood level. However, leadership at all levels should support teachers to have a thorough grasp of professional knowledge and fundamentals to contribute to the cause of educational progress in the future.

About pedagogical skills

Teachers’ pedagogical skills have long been regarded as essential. If teachers actively train pedagogical skills every

single day, their professionalism will be enhanced. According to table 5, most teachers grasp pedagogical skills, with 59,4% at a very good level and 36,6% at a good level. By mastering some skills such as planning skills, organisational skills, communication skills for teaching preschool, teachers have contributed to promoting the quality of fostering, nurturing, and educating children over the years in the district. However, there are 16% of teachers with skill criteria at an average level, so schools have to particularly pay attention to training early childhood teachers. Although 86.6% of teachers are at a good level, they also have some pedagogical limitations (difficulties

organizing teaching activities and communicating with children, colleagues, parents, and the community). To some teachers, their greatest barrier is that they do not have a thorough grasp of pedagogical skills these days. This causes the quality of fostering, nurturing, and educating children to fall short of the designated goals.

About fostering specialty and profession

Fostering specialty and profession is an critical step in training early childhood teachers. Thus, those who participate in the survey evaluate this issue seriously. This is illustrated in the table below.

Table 6: Summary of o opinions of 202 officials and teachers evaluating the process fostering specialty and profession of early childhood teachers

No.	Criteria	level assessment section							
		Very good		Good		Average		Poor	
		Quantity	%	Quantity	%	Quantity	%	Quantity	%
1	Fostering specialty and profession	115	57	49	24.3	21	10.4	17	8.4
2	Fostering pedagogical skills	123	61	36	18	43	21.3		
3	Fostering the level of political theory	119	59	83	41				
4	Fostering methodology and scientific research	36	18	41	20.3	85	42.1	40	20
5	fostering state administrative management	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6	Fostering foreign language	0	0	112	55.5	90	44.5	0	0
7	Fostering informatics	146	72	56	27.7				
8	Fostering administration	65	32	87	43	50	54.6		
9	Fostering advanced degree (college, university, master)	194	96	8	4				
10	Fostering to meet national and international standards	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

(Source: real-life survey from early childhood education institutions in Ninh Keu district)

Table 6 indicates that there are over 10 criteria in the survey: the criteria of fostering specialty at a good level with 57%; the criteria of fostering profession at a good level with 61%; fostering informatics, at a good level with 72%; and fostering to enhance professional standards, at a very good level with 96%. This shows a very positive signal as early childhood teachers mainly concentrate on building specialties, professions, and other supporting knowledge for teaching activities. Therefore, when planning to develop early childhood teachers, schools should thoroughly capitalize on these advantages. However, there are 2 criteria that have not been concerned. Not only are teachers proficient in their specialty, profession, and informatics, but they also need to master general skills in management, theory and practice, and foreign languages to prepare for the teaching process. Without these skills, teachers will lack flexibility in teaching, especially when fostering, nurturing, and educating children. Schools need to provide solutions to promote the content of the criteria, thereby helping teachers develop all their abilities to meet the requirements of industrialization, modernization, and educational innovation.

Conclusions

The current situation shows that there is a lack of teachers compared to the minimum norm according to Joint Circular No. 06/2015/TTLT-BGDĐT-BNV.

100% of teachers meet the standard and some exceed it in terms of qualifications and professional and specialty capabilities. 100% of them accomplish the task, including 85% with the title of Progressive Laborer and 8,3% with the title of Emulative Soldier at the Grassroots Level.

Early childhood teachers range in age from 31 to 45 years old (81.4%), with the highest teaching seniority ranging

from 11 to 20 years (82.4%). In terms of gender, all teachers are female.

The quality of teachers at early childhood schools in Ninh Kieu district, Can Tho City: political, moral, lifestyle qualities, and pedagogical skills were evaluated at very good and good levels.

In terms of fostering specialty and profession, the criteria of fostering specialty at a good level with 57%; the criteria of fostering profession at a good level with 61%; fostering informatics, at a good level with 72%; and fostering to enhance professional standards, at a very good level with 96%.

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