

IMPACT OF PROFESSIONAL VISION ON ACADEMIC FIDELITY OF PRE-SERVICE TRAINEE TEACHERS: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

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Abstract

This study was designed to explore the impact of professional vision on academic fidelity of pre-service trainee teachers. The study adopted a descriptive survey design, given the study's purpose and the merits of the survey method. A sample of 234 pre-service trainee teachers doing their second-year Bachelor of Education programme at three selected colleges of education in Tirunelveli district, Tamil Nadu State, was purposively selected. The instruments used in the study were the Pre-Service Teachers Professional Vision Questionnaire and the Pre-Service Teachers Academic Fidelity Inventory. Based on the analysis of the results, it is concluded that professional vision affects the academic fidelity of pre-service trainee teachers.

Key Words: Professional vision, academic fidelity, pre-service trainee teachers

Introduction

Teachers have a crucial role to play with their specialised knowledge and skills, and inspirational teaching begins with teachers with passion for their subjects (The Royal Society, 2025). The National Education Policy 2020 (NEP) begins with the assertion that education is fundamental for achieving full human potential and for the development of an equitable and just society, thus emphasising that education must aim at social transformation (Kasinathan, 2021). The success of an educational system lies in producing quality and efficient teachers in their pre-service training period. A teacher with in-depth knowledge and multiple skills is an asset to the nation. Several studies have found that teachers' content knowledge has

significant positive effects on student achievement (UNESCO, 2022). A teacher's professional vision moves ahead with clarity, and a lack of professional vision stagnates the career. The professional vision may change throughout the career as it is influenced by multiple factors. Teachers' visions help inspire teachers' instructional moves, determine how they feel about their teaching, and shape the decisions and goals they set for their professional learning (Arlington, 2022). It determines the career plan and takes one to where one wants to be.

A professional vision is a clear picture of what to do and do not want out to do in career and is unique to professional goals, values, personal commitments, and responsibilities outside of work. It is a mental picture of what one aspires to that shapes one's actions and decisions (Bennet, 2022). A professional vision is influenced by socio-cultural patterns of perception (Steinwachs & Martens, 2025). It is a clear picture of what the future teaching profession might look like (OECD, n.d.)

Fidelity, as defined by Merriam-Webster, is the quality or state of being faithful and accurate in detail. It is defined as the extent to which a provider delivers an intervention as it was originally intended (Basha et al., 2024). Fidelity is a complex construct, and as a term, it may be referred to as 'Integrity. Educators may have varying views and understandings of what it means to be faithful in the teacher education programme offered to pre-service trainee teachers: Faithful to the objectives? To every scripted lesson plan? To all of the texts? To the program's scope and sequence? To their students? (Serravallo, 2024). In its basic form, it refers to the extent to which an intervention has been implemented as intended (Young, 2024). Academic Fidelity is defined as doing the right thing in the right way, even when unobserved (ADuvalZinn, 2023). Academic fidelity practices of trainee teachers during their pre-service training programme would have a direct impact and influence their teaching profession practices upon becoming a teacher. Fidelity has not always been prioritised (Detrich & States, 2020), though it forms the basis of academic honesty. A clear professional vision contributes to developing the attitude and the mindset to ensure academic fidelity.

Identified Research Gaps

There have been several studies about pre-service trainee teachers and pre-service teacher education at the national level (Das & Biswas, 2024; Padmanabha, 2023) and international levels (Adillón et al., 2025; Iliasova, 2025; Nichol, 2025; Fitzsimons et al., 2024; Van Katwijk et al., 2021). Similarly, research on academic fidelity, which is synonymous with academic integrity, has been done in good numbers (Balalle & Pannilage, 2025; Harrad et al., 2024; Davis, 2023; Nenezić, 2023).

A Google search for the keywords "academic integrity and professional vision of pre-service teachers – published research papers" yields no studies that combine these two variables, suggesting a research gap. This research gap sparked the investigators' interest and curiosity, prompting them to conduct this study. These gaps in existing literature reinforce the relevance of this study and its potential contribution to implementing appropriate practices among the trainee teachers to improve the effectiveness of the teacher education programme.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to explore professional vision on academic fidelity of pre-service trainee teachers in Tirunelveli district, Tamil Nadu. Therefore the following objectives were pre-fixed in the study.

1. To assess the professional vision and academic fidelity of pre-service trainee teachers
2. To examine the differences in professional vision and academic fidelity of pre-service trainee teachers with regard to gender, educational qualification, and academic discipline.
3. To determine if there is any significant impact of professional vision on academic fidelity of pre-service trainee teachers

.Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. Do the pre-service trainee teachers have a clear and optimistic future vision towards their teaching profession? If so, to what extent?
2. Do the pre-service trainee teachers practice academic fidelity in doing their academic activities? If so, to what extent?
3. Are there differences in the professional vision and academic fidelity of pre-service trainee teachers based on their gender, educational qualification and academic discipline? If so, are they significant?
4. Does professional vision really impacts academic fidelity of pre-service trainee teachers?

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference between male and female pre-service trainee teachers in their professional vision and academic fidelity.
2. There is no significant difference between the pre-service trainee teachers with undergraduate and postgraduate academic qualification in their professional vision and academic fidelity.
3. There is no significant difference between the pre-service trainee teachers of different academic disciplines in their professional vision and academic fidelity.
4. There is no significant impact of professional vision on academic fidelity of pre-service trainee teachers.

Significance of the Study

Teachers' professional vision has been acknowledged as one of the key elements of their professional competence (Muhonen et al., 2023). Since teachers' professional vision is acknowledged as an important indicator of their professional competence, rigorous research is needed to map teachers' professional vision in authentic classroom settings (Muhonen et al., 2023). A professional vision is developed over time based on many observations, experiences and predictions. Enhancing teachers' professional vision may contribute to increasing the quality of teaching-learning processes (Cocca & Cocca, 2024), and hence, it is significant to research the professional vision of teachers and pre-service trainee teachers.

Fidelity means implementing classroom lessons and activities as intended by the programme's developer. Academic fidelity is strictly adhering to the given task with loyalty and truthfulness. Fidelity to a program requires teachers who can adapt and maintain fidelity to their curriculum while supporting and engaging their students (Serravallo, 2024). Completing an academic task, be it done within the school or outside the school, either in the presence or absence of the teacher, without sincerity, is a colossal loss to the entire teaching-learning process. Cheating while doing the academic tasks is against the basic principles of honesty, integrity and fidelity has to be rebuked at any cost by both teachers and students, as it causes no learning and mars the intellectual growth and the purpose itself. Hence, academic fidelity needs to be instilled in the minds of young students, nurtured in adolescents and reinforced in adult learners.

The results of this study are essential for understanding the professional vision regarding the academic fidelity of pre-service trainee teachers and its impact. This understanding is necessary for teacher educators, administrators and policy-makers. It would provide insights to take a plan of action to ensure the genuine implementation of curricular and co-curricular practices given as part of the teacher training programme. It would help to identify the areas of infidelity in academic practices among pre-service trainee teachers. The findings would help improve the quality of teacher education and pinpoint and address pitfalls in the planning, implementation, and evaluation stages. Human resource management could be improved without compromising quality by taking steps to motivate, inspire, and equip trainee teachers to carry out curricular activities with sincerity, while understanding their future responsibilities in developing knowledge and skills among their students. Teachers have a nation-building responsibility, shouldered by the entire teaching fraternity. The levels of professional vision and academic fidelity among the trainee teachers revealed in the study's findings would provide insights for organising remedial and reconstructive efforts, with an optimistic approach to conducting workshops, seminars, symposia, talks, and counselling services. Above all, the required assistance to eliminate the negative attitude they have toward their future employment, which looks bleak and unclear, due to factors that create a lack of hope. It would motivate teachers to put in a little more sincere effort to complete the academic work, genuinely avoiding malpractice and unfair practices. Therefore, the result of this study will help the pre-service trainee teachers and teacher educators on the need to be educated on various aspects of professional vision and academic fidelity and their impact on each other, which will help to improve the quality of the teacher education system as a whole in the country by generalizing based on the findings of the study.

Research Methodology

The purpose of research is to discover answers to questions through the application of scientific procedures ... to find out the truth which is hidden and which has not been discovered as yet (Bhome et al., 2013). There are three types of research methodology — quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods — which can be chosen based on the research objectives (Sreekumar, 2023). Survey research is a useful and legitimate approach to research that has clear benefits in helping to describe and explore variables and constructs of

interest (Ponto, 2015). It is a useful method in terms of allowing researchers to statistically estimate the distribution of characteristics in a population (Allen, 2017), provides important information about what people think or do (Santesso et al., 2020), economical (Goodfellow, 2023), and can quickly reach a larger sample at a faster rate. As this study is exploratory, examining the impact of professional vision on the academic fidelity of pre-service trainee teachers and the differences in relation to selected demographic factors, the investigators decided to adopt a survey method. Purposive sampling is a non-randomised sampling technique (Bisht, 2024) in which the researcher chooses a sample (Bisht, 2024) due to their characteristics (Nikolopoulou, 2023). The investigators used purposive sampling to collect data from 234 pre-service trainee teachers (48 male, 186 female) enrolled in the second-year Bachelor of Education degree programme at three selected colleges of education in the Tirunelveli district of Tamil Nadu State.

The investigators constructed and validated two research tools: the Pre-Service Teachers Professional Vision Questionnaire and the Pre-Service Teachers Academic Fidelity Inventory, to collect data for this research investigation. The Professional Vision Questionnaire and the Academic Fidelity Inventory were developed on five- and three-point scales, respectively. Both tools were unidimensional in their composition. The Professional Vision Questionnaire was constructed on a five-point scale with 15 items after validation, with a maximum score of 75 and a minimum score of 15. The Pre-Service Teachers Academic Fidelity Inventory was designed on a three-point scale with 12 items; the minimum score is 12 and the maximum is 36. All items in the tool were positive and unidimensional. The selected colleges of education are located within the same district, providing easy access. So, the investigators obtained prior permission from the relevant authorities and met the sample students in person, explained the purpose of the study, obtained their oral consent, and collected data using the provided research tools. The collected data were coded, tabulated and statistically analysed using SPSS.

Findings of Descriptive Analysis

Table 1 The Level of Professional Vision of Pre-service Trainee Teachers

Variable	Low		Moderate		High	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Professional Vision	57	24.4	126	53.8	51	21.8

Majority of pre-service trainee teachers (53.8%) have a moderate level of professional vision.

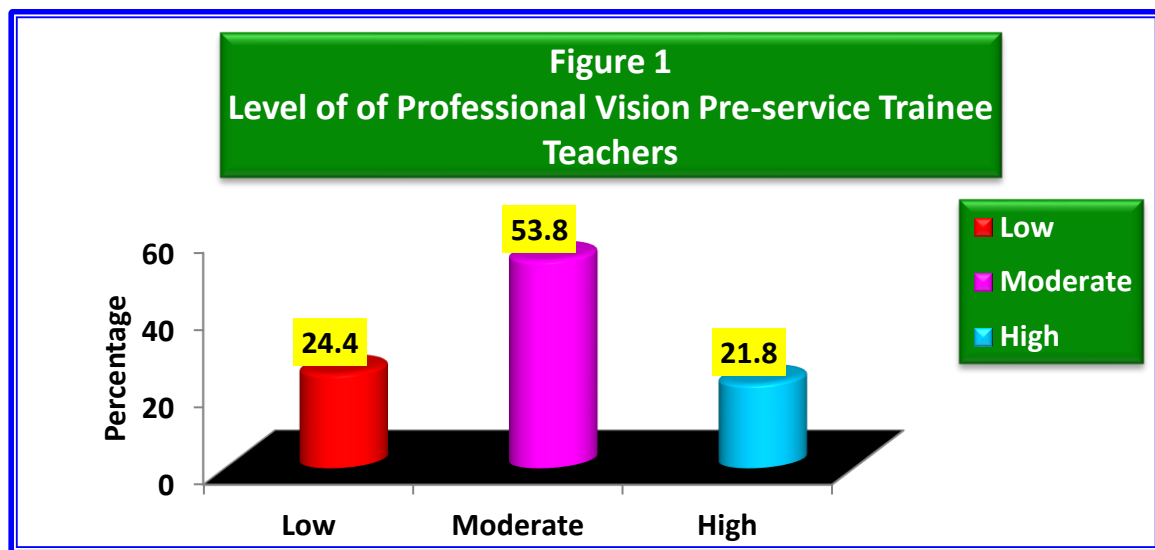
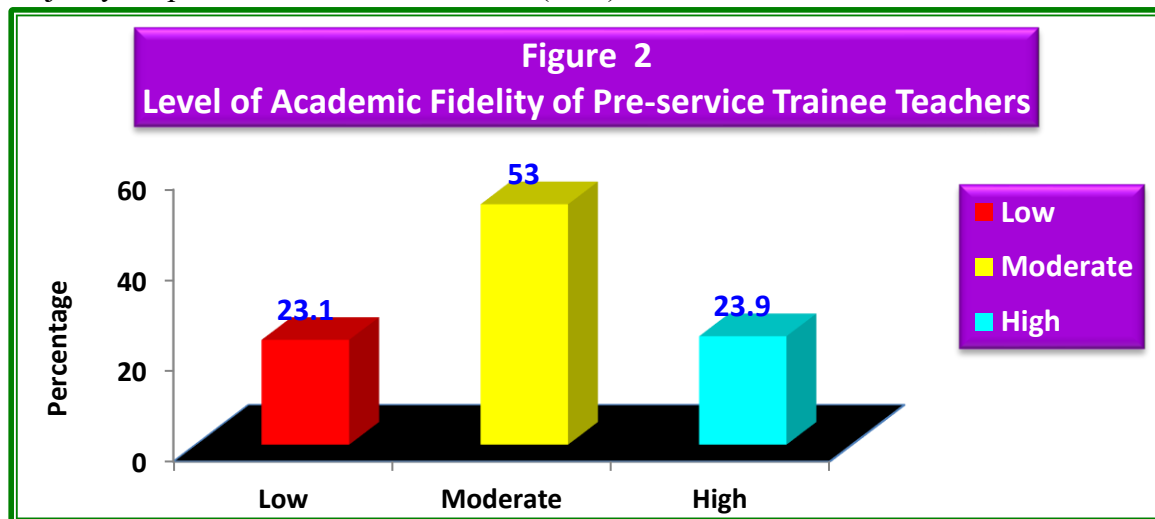


Table 2 Level of Academic Fidelity of Pre-service Trainee Teachers

Variable	Low		Moderate		High	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Academic Fidelity	54	23.1	124	53.0	56	23.9

Majority of pre-service trainee teachers (53%) have a moderate level of academic fidelity.



Findings of Differential Analysis

H₀1: There is no significant difference between male and female pre-service trainee teachers in their professional vision.

Table 3 Difference between Male and Female Pre-service trainee teachers in their Professional Vision

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	S.D	Calculated 't' value	Remark
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Professional Vision	Male	48	55.75	13.794	2.08	Significant
	Female	186	50.87	16.645		

It is inferred from the above table that the calculated 't' value (2.08) is greater than the table value (1.96) at the 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the respective null hypothesis is rejected. Thus, the results show a significant difference between male and female pre-service trainee teachers in their professional vision. While comparing the mean scores of male (Mean=55.75) and female pre-service trainee teachers (Mean=50.87), male pre-service trainee teachers show a higher professional vision than female pre-service trainee teachers.

H₀2: There is no significant difference between UG and PG qualified pre-service trainee teachers in their professional vision.

Table 4 Difference between UG and PG Qualified Pre-service Trainee Teachers in their Professional Vision

Variable	Educational Qualification	N	Mean	S.D	Calculated 't' value	Remark
Professional Vision	UG	178	51.57	16.006	2.56	Significant
	PG	56	52.98	16.770		

It is inferred from the above table that the calculated 't' value (2.56) is greater than the table value (1.96) at the 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the respective null hypothesis is rejected. Thus, the results show a significant difference between UG- and PG-qualified pre-service trainee teachers in their professional vision. While comparing the mean scores of UG (Mean=51.57) and PG qualified pre-service trainee teachers (Mean=52.98), the PG qualified pre-service trainee teachers show a higher professional vision than the UG qualified pre-service trainee teachers.

H₀3: There is no significant difference among Tamil, English, Mathematics, Physical Science, Biological Science, History, Computer Science, Commerce and Economics pedagogical subjects of pre-service trainee teachers in their professional vision.

Table 5 Difference among Tamil, English, Mathematics, Physical Science, Biological Science, History, Computer Science, Commerce and Economics Pedagogical Subjects of Pre-service teachers in their Professional Vision

Variable	Source variation	df (8, 225)		Calculated 'F' value	Remark
		Sum of squares	Mean square		
Professional Vision	Between	7758.059	969.757	1.73	Not Significant
	Within	53137.056	236.165		

It is inferred from the above table that the calculated 'F' value (1.73) is less than the table value (1.99) for the df 8, 225 at the 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the respective null hypothesis is accepted. Thus, the results show that there is no significant difference among pre-service trainee teachers in the pedagogical subjects of Tamil, English, Mathematics, Physical Science, Biological Science, History, Computer Science, Commerce, and Economics in their professional vision.

H₀4: There is no significant difference between male and female pre-service trainee teachers in their academic fidelity.

Table 6 Difference between Male and Female Pre-service trainee teachers in their Academic Fidelity

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	S.D	Calculated 't' value	Remark
Academic Fidelity	Male	48	24.42	6.687	2.80	Significant
	Female	186	23.49	6.300		

It is inferred from the above table that the calculated 't' value (2.80) is greater than the table value (1.96) at the 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the respective null hypothesis is rejected. Thus, the results show a significant difference between male and female pre-service trainee teachers in their academic fidelity. While comparing the mean scores of male (Mean=24.42) and female pre-service trainee teachers (Mean=23.49), male pre-service trainee teachers show higher academic fidelity than female pre-service trainee teachers.

H₀5: There is no significant difference between UG and PG qualified pre-service trainee teachers in their academic fidelity.

Table 7 Difference between UG and PG Qualified Pre-service Trainee Teachers in their Academic Fidelity

Variable	Educational Qualification	N	Mean	S.D	Calculated 't' value	Remark
Academic Fidelity	UG	178	24.03	6.224	2.55	Significant
	PG	56	22.52	6.728		

It is inferred from the above table that the calculated 't' value (2.55) is greater than the table value (1.96) at the 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the respective null hypothesis is rejected. Thus, the results show a significant difference between UG- and PG-qualified pre-service trainee teachers in their academic fidelity. While comparing the mean scores of UG (Mean=24.03) and PG qualified pre-service trainee teachers (Mean=22.52), the UG qualified pre-service trainee teachers show higher academic fidelity than the PG-qualified pre-service trainee teachers.

H₀6: There is no significant difference among Tamil, English, Mathematics, Physical Science, Biological Science, History, Computer Science, Commerce and Economics pedagogical subjects of pre-service trainee teachers in their academic fidelity.

Table 8

Difference among Tamil, English, Mathematics, Physical Science, Biological Science, History, Computer Science, Commerce and Economics Pedagogical Subjects of Pre-service teachers in their Academic Fidelity

Variable	Source variation	df (8, 225)		Calculated 'F' value	Remark
		Sum squares	Mean square		
Academic Fidelity	Between	1218.614	152.327	1.63	Not Significant
	Within	8225.386	36.557		

It is inferred from the above table that the calculated 'F' value (1.63) is less than the table value (1.99) for the df 8,225 at the 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the respective null hypothesis is accepted. Thus, the results show that there is no significant difference among pre-service trainee teachers in Tamil, English, Mathematics, Physical Science, Biological Science, History, Computer Science, Commerce, and Economics pedagogical subjects in their academic fidelity.

H₀7: There is no significant relationship between professional vision and academic fidelity of pre-service trainee teachers.

Table 9

Relationship between Professional Vision And Academic Fidelity of Pre-Service Trainee Teachers

Variables	N	df	Table 'γ' value	Calculated 'γ' value	Remarks
Professional Vision and Academic Fidelity	234	232	0.055	0.075	Significant

It is inferred from the above table that the calculated 'γ' value (0.075) is higher than the table 'γ' value (0.055) at the 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. Thus, the results show a significant correlation between professional vision and academic fidelity among pre-service trainee teachers.

Conclusion

The study aimed to explore the impact of professional vision on academic fidelity of pre-service trainee teachers doing a Bachelor of Education degree who would become teachers in secondary schools in India upon completion of this professional course. It is an exploratory

first-time study of the relationship between professional vision and academic fidelity among pre-service trainee teachers in colleges of education. Based on the data analysis, it is concluded that the majority of the responding pre-service trainee teachers have a moderate level of professional vision and academic fidelity. Male pre-service trainee teachers were found to have a clearer professional vision and greater academic fidelity than female pre-service trainee teachers. While the PG-qualified pre-service trainee teachers were found to have better professional vision, the UG-qualified trainee teachers were better in their academic fidelity. No significant difference was found in academic discipline among pre-service teacher trainees. The regression analysis revealed a significant effect of professional vision on academic fidelity among the trainee teachers. The educational implications of the research findings are of immense value to trainee teachers, teacher educators, educational institutions, and higher-level administrative bodies. It calls for increasing the level of academic fidelity and professional vision to improve the effectiveness of teacher education programmes. The research carried out in the three educational institutions located in a single town with a limited number of samples at a limited level calls for future researchers to undertake this research further at a wider level using mixed research method, as its findings could be more generalised and applied in teacher education institutions with greater authenticity for the benefit of a larger population. It would be a valuable research contribution to the entire teacher community at pre-service and in-service levels.

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