



## AN INVESTIGATION INTO HUMAN RESOURCE ISSUES AND THEIR RESOLUTION IN PRESCHOOL EDUCATION ORGANIZATIONS

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### **Abstract:**

This study investigated the resolution of human resource issues in preschool education institutions in Umnugovi Province through a three-stage research process. A total of 160 teachers participated in the study. Data were collected and analyzed using document analysis, questionnaires, interviews, and mathematical-statistical methods. The findings revealed that the supply of qualified professional personnel in the province had reached 97%, while more than 92% of teachers had maintained stable employment for over five years. In addition, 70% of teachers expressed their intention to continue working in their profession, and the overall level of workplace satisfaction was reported at 59%. The study further found that Umnugovi Province achieved positive and distinctive outcomes in terms of human resource provision, employee retention, and workplace satisfaction within the preschool education sector through comprehensive policy implementation. In collaboration with the School of Preschool Education at Mongolian National University of Education, the province implemented integrated measures including local teacher preparation programs, social welfare support, and salary incentives. These initiatives contributed significantly to strengthening the stability and sustainability of the preschool education workforce compared to other local provinces in Mongolia.

**Keywords:** preschool education, human resources

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## 1. Introduction

Preschool education institutions are not only educational organizations but also institutions responsible for ensuring the quality of life, safety, protection, and overall well-being of young children. According to the *General Education Law of Mongolia* (Government of Mongolia, 2023), institutions providing preschool and general education include kindergartens and general education schools. Furthermore, the *Law on Preschool and General Education* defines kindergartens as institutions responsible for implementing preschool education objectives and curricula while conducting comprehensive activities related to childcare, protection, and the promotion of children's development and socialization (Government of Mongolia, 2023). In this regard, preschool education institutions play a significant role not only in educational provision but also in supporting children's holistic development during early childhood. The twenty-first century has become a period of profound transformation in educational philosophy and paradigms. Within the context of these paradigm shifts, education has increasingly moved from the traditional "knowledge transmission" model toward constructivist and learner-centered approaches emphasizing knowledge creation, critical inquiry, and active participation in learning processes. Contemporary educational paradigms are strongly associated with competency-based education systems that prioritize the development of learners' competencies, creativity, problem-solving abilities, and critical thinking skills rather than the mere accumulation of factual knowledge.

As Tony Bush (2006) argues, modern educational management increasingly requires institutions to adapt strategically to changing social, economic, and educational demands while strengthening organizational effectiveness and human resource capacity. Consequently, education has become one of the central determinants of sustainable national development in the twenty-first century. A growing body of theoretical and empirical research demonstrates that the first six years of a child's life represent the most critical period for brain development, cognitive growth, emotional regulation, and socialization. During this stage, the quality of educational environments, interpersonal relationships, and early learning experiences exerts a long-term influence on children's lifelong development and future well-being.

James Heckman (2006) highlighted the economic significance of early childhood education through the human capital investment model, demonstrating that investments in early childhood education generate substantially higher social and economic returns than investments made later in life. According to Heckman's analysis, every dollar invested in early childhood education yields returns estimated at seven to thirteen times greater than investments targeting adulthood. Such findings have substantially influenced international educational policy and strengthened the recognition of preschool education as one of the most effective forms of human capital investment. Similarly, the Harvard University Center on the Developing Child (2017) reported that children who participated in high-quality early childhood development programs were significantly more likely to complete formal schooling, maintain stable employment, and

avoid involvement in criminal activities compared to children without access to such programs. These findings reinforce the importance of ensuring the quality and effectiveness of preschool education services, particularly through the provision of qualified and stable human resources. As organizational management scholars emphasize, human resources constitute the most valuable and strategic asset within any organization because institutional quality and performance are largely dependent upon the competence, motivation, and stability of employees (Oyungerel & Khajidmaa, 2023; Purevdorj, 2009). Contemporary human resource management trends increasingly focus on strategic planning, workforce sustainability, employee performance evaluation, and the development of effective organizational support systems aligned with institutional goals and changing workplace demands.

In Mongolia, the preparation of kindergarten teachers with higher education qualifications began in 1991, while opportunities for specialized bachelor-level preschool teacher education expanded significantly after 2008 through dedicated university programs. At present, five public and seventeen private higher education institutions provide preschool education teacher preparation programs nationwide. Alongside these national developments, regional disparities and local demographic changes have created varying levels of demand for preschool education professionals. Umnugovi Province, one of Mongolia's rapidly developing mining regions, has experienced substantial population growth and migration in recent years. As a result, the demand for preschool education services, institutional expansion, and qualified human resources has increased considerably. Statistical data from the provincial education sector indicate that between 2019 and 2025, ten new kindergartens were established and 257 additional human resource positions were created within the preschool education sector.

The future development and sustainability of the Mongolian nation are closely connected to the well-being and development of its younger generations. Ensuring healthy, safe, and supportive developmental environments for children is therefore a matter of both educational and national importance. Since the foundations of cultural identity, social values, language, traditions, and cognitive development are established during the preschool years, the availability of qualified preschool education professionals becomes critically important. Human resource issues within preschool education institutions directly influence the quality, accessibility, and sustainability of educational services and therefore represent a key foundation for future societal development. In response to these challenges, forward-looking management approaches and effective policy implementation are essential for strengthening workforce stability and improving institutional capacity. Against this background, the present study examined how human resource issues have been addressed within the preschool education sector of Umnugovi Province.

## 2. Research Methodology

This study employed a mixed-methods research design integrating both quantitative and qualitative research approaches to examine how human resource issues have been addressed within preschool education institutions in Umnugovi Province. Mixed-methods research is widely recognized as an effective approach for obtaining a comprehensive understanding of educational and organizational phenomena because it combines the strengths of numerical analysis with in-depth contextual interpretation (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). In the context of this study, the integration of quantitative and qualitative data enabled a broader understanding of workforce stability, workplace satisfaction, and human resource management practices within preschool education institutions. The study was conducted in three sequential stages. During the quantitative phase, questionnaires and mathematical-statistical methods were utilized to collect and analyze numerical data related to workplace satisfaction, workforce retention, and professional stability among preschool teachers. Quantitative survey methods are particularly effective for identifying patterns, trends, and relationships across large participant groups (Cohen et al., 2018).

The qualitative component employed interviews, observations, and document analysis techniques. Qualitative methods provided opportunities to explore participants' experiences, perceptions, and institutional practices in greater depth. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with educational administrators and kindergarten directors to obtain detailed information regarding policy implementation, workforce management strategies, and institutional support systems. In addition, document analysis was used to examine provincial educational statistics and policy-related materials from 2019 to 2025. Document analysis is considered an important qualitative method for interpreting official records, policies, and institutional reports within educational research contexts (Bowen, 2009).

**Table 1:** Research Stages and Methodological Design

Stage	Method	Description
Stage 1	Document Analysis	Comparative analysis of statistical data from 2019–2025
Stage 2	Questionnaire Survey (n = 160)	Investigation of workplace satisfaction and employee retention
Stage 3	Interviews	Collection of information from management representatives and kindergarten directors

### 2.1 Description of the Research Sample

The participants in this study consisted of 160 teachers employed in preschool education institutions in Umnugovi Province who participated in the questionnaire survey. The sample represented teachers with varying years of professional experience and institutional backgrounds. In addition to the survey participants, qualitative interview participants included representatives from the provincial education department,

methodological specialists, and kindergarten directors. These participants were selected because of their direct involvement in educational management, human resource policy implementation, and institutional administration within the preschool education sector. Their perspectives provided valuable insights into workforce development strategies, teacher retention policies, and local governance practices related to preschool education.

### **3. Research Findings**

#### **3.1 Analysis of Statistical Data (2019–2025)**

Statistical data related to preschool education institutions in Umnugovi Province were analyzed for the period between 2019 and 2025 in order to examine trends in human resource development and workforce capacity within the sector. The findings indicate that graduates from the School of Preschool Education at Mongolian National University of Education accounted for approximately 30% of all professionals employed in the provincial preschool education sector, while graduates from six other higher education institutions represented the remaining 70%. This distribution demonstrates that multiple higher education institutions contribute to the preparation of preschool education professionals in Mongolia, while the Mongolian National University of Education continues to play a major role in supplying qualified teachers to local educational institutions. The analysis further revealed that the availability of qualified professional personnel reached 97%, indicating that the province has achieved a high level of human resource sufficiency within the preschool education sector. This finding suggests that the province's long-term human resource policies and workforce development strategies have been relatively stable and effective. Previous studies in educational management emphasize that strategic workforce planning, institutional collaboration, and continuous professional support are essential factors for maintaining educational quality and organizational sustainability (Bush, 2006; Oyungerel & Khajidmaa, 2023). The findings of the present study appear consistent with these perspectives.

#### **3.2 Results of the Questionnaire Survey (n = 160)**

The questionnaire survey findings demonstrated a relatively high level of workforce stability among preschool teachers in Umnugovi Province. At the provincial level, 92.5% of respondents reported that they had worked within the education sector for more than five years, while 83.6% indicated that they had remained employed in their current institution for over five years. These findings suggest a comparatively stable workforce with strong employee retention rates. Workforce stability is considered a critical factor influencing institutional continuity, educational quality, and the effectiveness of early childhood education services because experienced teachers contribute substantially to children's developmental outcomes and institutional capacity (Ministry of Education of Mongolia, 2021).

**Table 2: Teachers' Years of Work Experience**

Years of Experience	In the Education Sector (n=160)	In the Current Institution (n=160)	Percentage (%) (Institution)
First year	12 (7.5%)	26 (16.4%)	16.4%
1–5 years	52 (33.1%)	70 (44.0%)	44.0%
5–10 years	40 (25.0%)	33 (20.1%)	20.1%
10+ years	56 (34.4%)	31 (19.5%)	19.5%

The findings indicate that a substantial proportion of teachers have accumulated considerable professional experience within the education sector. Such stability may positively influence institutional culture, teacher collaboration, and educational continuity within preschool settings. Educational management scholars have argued that workforce retention contributes directly to organizational effectiveness, employee morale, and educational service quality (Purevdorj, 2009).

### 3.3 Indicators of Professional Development and Workforce Stability

Professional development opportunities and workplace conditions were also examined as part of the survey. Among the respondents, 61% reported that adequate opportunities were available for professional growth and career advancement within their workplace. This finding suggests that the province has made efforts to support teacher development through institutional training and professional learning opportunities. Continuous professional development is widely recognized as an essential component of teacher quality and educational improvement because it strengthens pedagogical competence, motivation, and long-term professional commitment. Furthermore, 70% of respondents stated that they intended to continue working in their profession in the future, indicating a positive level of professional commitment and workforce sustainability. The positive influence of collegial relationships and workplace climate was also highlighted by 71.1% of participants, demonstrating the importance of supportive organizational culture in maintaining employee motivation and institutional stability. Previous studies have shown that positive workplace relationships and collaborative environments are strongly associated with teacher retention and job satisfaction within educational institutions (Bush, 2006). However, despite these positive indicators, workload-related concerns remain significant. More than half of the respondents (55%) reported that their workload was excessive. This finding suggests that although workforce retention is relatively stable, teachers continue to experience substantial professional pressure and occupational demands. Excessive workload has been identified in previous educational research as a major factor contributing to occupational stress, burnout, and reduced work-life balance among teachers.

**Table 3:** Indicators of Professional Stability

Indicator	Positive Responses (%)	n
Adequate opportunities for professional development	61%	160
Intention to continue working in the profession	70%	160
Positive influence of collegial relationships and workplace climate	71.1%	160
Workload perceived as excessive	55%	160

### 3.4 Workplace Satisfaction Survey

Workplace satisfaction was examined across eight dimensions related to organizational support, social welfare, professional recognition, and working conditions. The findings demonstrate varying levels of satisfaction across these dimensions.

**Table 4:** Results of Workplace Satisfaction Across Eight Dimensions

Satisfaction Dimension	Highly Satisfactory (%)	Satisfactory (%)	Total Positive (%)
Administrative support	26.7%	43.5%	70.2%
Support from local government/ soum administration	18.1%	30.6%	48.7%
Resolution of social welfare issues	14.9%	35.4%	50.3%
Salary and financial incentives	11.1%	33.3%	44.4%
Awards and recognition	7.4%	29.6%	37.0%
Work productivity	13.0%	55.6%	68.6%
Collegial relationships and attitudes	18.6%	50.9%	69.5%
Time available for family life	4.9%	18.5%	23.4%

Overall, the average level of workplace satisfaction reached 59%, indicating a moderate level of professional satisfaction among preschool teachers in the province. The highest levels of satisfaction were associated with administrative support (70.2%), collegial relationships (69.5%), and work productivity (68.6%). These findings suggest that institutional leadership and positive workplace culture contribute significantly to employee morale and organizational stability. In contrast, the lowest-rated dimension was time available for family life, with only 23.4% positive responses. This finding appears closely associated with workload-related pressures and suggests that work-life balance remains a major challenge for preschool teachers. Similarly, satisfaction regarding salary and financial incentives (44.4%) and awards and recognition (37.0%) remained relatively low, indicating that financial and motivational support systems require further improvement. Regarding workplace conditions, 72.6% of respondents evaluated their working environment as adequate, reflecting relatively positive perceptions of institutional infrastructure and resources. However, only 47.5% of respondents believed that performance evaluation processes were fair and objective, suggesting a need to strengthen transparency and accountability within institutional evaluation systems. In addition, 51.9% considered health-related support measures to be sufficient, indicating moderate satisfaction with employee welfare and health support services. Overall, these findings demonstrate that while the province has achieved notable progress in workforce stability and institutional support, further efforts are

needed to address workload pressures, work-life balance, and employee welfare in order to sustain long-term human resource development within the preschool education sector.

### **3.5 Interview Analysis**

Interviews conducted with representatives of the provincial education department, methodological specialists, and kindergarten directors revealed that Umnugovi Province has implemented a range of comprehensive and coordinated measures aimed at increasing the supply of qualified human resources and strengthening workforce stability within the preschool education sector. The interview participants consistently emphasized that sustainable human resource management requires not only teacher recruitment but also long-term strategies focused on employee welfare, professional development, and institutional support. The findings indicated that provincial educational authorities have adopted integrated policy approaches to address challenges related to teacher shortages, workforce retention, and professional sustainability. According to the interview participants, one of the major initiatives has been the implementation of housing projects and social welfare programs designed to improve the living conditions and social security of teachers and staff. Previous studies in educational management have shown that social welfare support and employment security are important factors influencing employee motivation, professional commitment, and retention within educational institutions (Purevdorj, 2009). In geographically remote and rapidly developing regions such as Umnugovi Province, housing support appears to play a particularly important role in attracting and retaining qualified preschool teachers.

Participants also highlighted ongoing efforts to strengthen salary systems, financial incentives, and bonus structures for preschool education professionals. Financial incentives are widely recognized as an important component of workforce sustainability because inadequate compensation often contributes to teacher turnover and occupational dissatisfaction. The findings suggest that local authorities have attempted to address these concerns by introducing additional financial support measures aimed at improving employee motivation and professional stability. Another significant initiative identified during the interviews was the provision of financial assistance for incoming university students and employment opportunities for graduates. According to the participants, such measures were intended to encourage young people to pursue preschool education careers while simultaneously ensuring local employment opportunities after graduation. This strategy reflects a long-term human resource planning approach that aligns workforce preparation with local educational needs. Educational management scholars emphasize that strategic recruitment and workforce planning are essential for maintaining institutional sustainability and addressing regional disparities in educational service provision (Bush, 2006).

The interview findings further demonstrated that regular professional development and in-service training programs are organized within the province to strengthen teachers' pedagogical knowledge, professional competencies, and career

development opportunities. Continuous professional development has been widely recognized as a critical factor influencing educational quality, teacher effectiveness, and professional satisfaction. Through locally organized training programs, teachers are provided with opportunities to update their knowledge, improve instructional practices, and strengthen professional collaboration within the sector. In addition, participants emphasized the importance of institutional collaboration between Umnugovi Province and the School of Preschool Education at Mongolian National University of Education. Through formal cooperation agreements, the province has worked to prepare preschool education professionals locally and strengthen regional workforce capacity. This collaborative model appears to have contributed positively to addressing teacher shortages and improving the long-term sustainability of human resources within the preschool education sector. Overall, the interview findings suggest that the integrated policy measures implemented in Umnugovi Province have contributed significantly to strengthening both the recruitment and retention of qualified preschool education professionals. The combination of social welfare support, financial incentives, local teacher preparation, and continuous professional development reflects a comprehensive human resource management strategy that may serve as a useful model for other provinces facing similar workforce challenges within the preschool education sector.

#### **4. Conclusion**

Based on the three-stage investigation into the resolution of human resource issues in preschool education institutions in Umnugovi Province, several important conclusions can be drawn regarding workforce stability, professional sustainability, and institutional human resource management within the preschool education sector. First, the findings demonstrated that the supply of qualified professional personnel improved substantially between 2019 and 2025, reaching 97%. This result indicates that the province's comprehensive human resource policies and workforce development strategies have been relatively effective in addressing teacher shortages and strengthening professional capacity within preschool education institutions. Previous studies in educational management emphasize that strategic workforce planning and institutional collaboration are essential for ensuring the sustainability and quality of educational services (Bush, 2006; Purevdorj, 2009). The findings of this study suggest that Umnugovi Province has made considerable progress in these areas. Second, the questionnaire survey findings revealed that the average level of workplace satisfaction reached 59%, while the workforce retention rate was reported at 92.5%. These findings indicate that relatively favorable conditions have been established for maintaining a stable professional workforce within the preschool education sector. Stable human resources are critically important in early childhood education because continuity in teacher-child relationships contributes positively to children's emotional security, learning experiences, and developmental outcomes (Harvard Center on the Developing Child, 2017).

In addition, positive workplace relationships and administrative support were identified as important contributors to teacher satisfaction and professional commitment. Third, the interview findings demonstrated that Umnugovi Province has achieved comparatively positive outcomes in human resource provision and workforce stability through the implementation of integrated policy measures. These policies included local teacher preparation initiatives, social welfare support systems, housing programs, professional development opportunities, and salary incentive mechanisms. The collaborative partnership established between the province and Mongolian National University of Education appears to have played a particularly important role in strengthening local human resource capacity and addressing workforce shortages. Such integrated approaches reflect contemporary perspectives in human resource management, which emphasize the importance of aligning educational policy, institutional support, and workforce sustainability strategies (Oyungerel & Khajidmaa, 2023).

Despite these positive outcomes, several challenges remain unresolved. High workload demands continue to represent a major concern, as 55% of respondents perceived their workload to be excessive. Furthermore, only 23.4% of participants expressed satisfaction with the amount of time available for family life, indicating ongoing difficulties related to work-life balance. Previous research has shown that excessive workload and occupational stress can negatively affect teacher well-being, job satisfaction, and long-term retention within the profession. Therefore, these issues require further policy attention and institutional intervention in order to sustain workforce stability and employee well-being. Overall, the findings of this study suggest that the human resource management practices implemented in Umnugovi Province may serve as a replicable and adaptable model for other provinces in Mongolia. The combination of local teacher preparation, social welfare support, professional development opportunities, and integrated workforce policies demonstrates a potentially effective approach for strengthening human resource sustainability within the preschool education sector.

## **5. Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the present study, the following recommendations are proposed to strengthen human resource management and workforce sustainability within preschool education institutions. First, preschool education institutions should implement measures aimed at improving workload distribution and strengthening work-time management practices. Reducing excessive workload and promoting healthier work-life balance conditions are essential for improving teacher well-being, professional satisfaction, and long-term workforce retention. Second, enhancing the fairness, transparency, and effectiveness of salary structures, bonus systems, and financial incentive mechanisms would provide important motivation for retaining qualified professionals within the sector. Financial support and professional recognition

have been consistently identified as key factors influencing employee satisfaction and organizational commitment in educational institutions. Third, the collaborative model implemented between Umnugovi Province and Mongolian National University of Education for preparing preschool education professionals locally should be further examined and potentially expanded at the national level. Localized teacher preparation programs may help address regional workforce shortages and strengthen the sustainability of preschool education services in rural and developing areas. Finally, strengthening health support services, employee welfare programs, and social security guarantees should remain a priority within educational policy and institutional management. Expanding such support systems would contribute significantly to maintaining workforce stability, improving teacher well-being, and sustaining the long-term development of human resources within the preschool education sector.

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### **Conflict of Interest Statement**

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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