

Cultivating Motivation in Pre-Service English Teachers: Strategies for Success

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Abstract

Maintaining motivation is crucial for the successful development of pre-service teachers (PSTs) in Japan, especially in English language education. Despite structured training programs, many PSTs face challenges that diminish their motivation over time. At the author's university, enrollment in the teacher education program drops from over 100 in the first year to around 30 by the fourth year. Alarmingly, only about 5% of those who enroll actually pursue teaching careers after obtaining their licenses.

One major challenge is the intense academic pressure, as PSETs must meet high standards in both language proficiency and pedagogical knowledge. This dual demand can create significant stress, particularly when balancing theoretical learning with practical application. Additionally, limited exposure to real-world teaching before entering the workforce can lead to feelings of unpreparedness and self-doubt. Cultural expectations emphasizing conformity and modesty further complicate their ability to assert confidence in the classroom.

These challenges highlight the need for effective strategies to cultivate and sustain motivation among PSETs. By addressing these issues, teacher education programs can better support their trainees, ensuring they enter the profession with confidence and enthusiasm.

Keywords: motivation; pre-service English teachers; teaching practicum