

Understanding The Professional Identity of University-Based Teacher Educators in China

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Abstract

Understanding the professional identity of university-based teacher educators (UBTEs) enables a better understanding of how UBTEs understand and engage in the work of teacher education. Although existing research has deepened our understanding of UBTE professional identity, little empirical research investigates UBTEs who enter into teacher education from academic backgrounds. Equally, research exploring UBTE professional identity from perspectives other than a holistic one is limited, and seldom uses large-scale quantitative or mixed research methods. Situated within a pragmatist paradigm, this thesis addresses the identified gaps using an exploratory sequential mixed-method research design in the Chinese context, where most UBTEs transition from academic pathways, to investigate how Chinese UBTEs perceive their professional identity and why they have these identity perceptions.

The nature and formation process of being a Chinese UBTE was revealed in three ways: exploring what comprises UBTEs' professional identity, clearing the boundaries and relationships amongst these components, and examining the influences of identity formation. The corresponding three studies found that, first, UBTEs' professional identity was multi-faceted and included multiple sub-identities, reflecting the myriad requirements of their roles and work. Second, UBTEs' professional identity was multi-layered, with their sub-identities as a teacher-of-teachers and a researcher dominating. Although balancing teaching and research-related identities was found to be a key to success for UBTEs, UBTEs often encountered a tension between research expectations and teaching imperatives. Third,

forming a balanced identity was not solely an outcome of individual effort, but was shaped by the teacher education ecosystem (e.g., institutional norms, support, social relationships) where UBTEs work.

Collectively, these findings suggest that UBTEs cannot be seen as a homogenous group because how UBTEs understand and practice their roles is shaped by their pathways into teacher education, political, historical, and cultural contexts, and individual UBTEs' characteristics. These findings highlight the importance for researchers to conduct context-based or culture-responsive teacher education research, and identify the distinct professional development needs of the stakeholders. Despite this, the consistent elements and ideal image of being a UBTE found in this study also suggest opportunities for international collaboration and dialogue in preparing effective UBTEs and teacher education programmes.

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List of Acronyms

AVE	Average Variance Extracted
CCCCP	Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party
CF	Consent Forms
CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
CFI	Comparative Fit Index
CI	Confidence Intervals
CNKI	China National Knowledge Infrastructure
CR	Composite Reliability
CU	Colleague-UBTEs Relationship
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
IS	Institutional Support
K-12	Kindergarten to 12 th Grade Education
LLCI	The Lower Limit Confident Interval
MLR	Maximum Likelihood Method with a Robust Statistic
MoE	Ministry of Education
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
PIS	Participant Information Sheet
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
PRISMA	Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-analyses Guidelines

RD	Research Demand
RI	Researcher Identity
RMSEA	Root Mean Squared Error of Approximation
SCU	Schoolteachers-UBTEs Relationship
SD	Standard Deviation
SRMR	Standardised Root Mean Squared Residual
SSCI	Social Sciences Citation Index
STU	Preservice Teachers-UBTEs Relationship
TD	Teaching Demand
TI	Teacher-of-Teachers Identity
TLI	Tucker-Lewis Index
UBTEs	University-Based Teacher Educators
U-G-S	University-Government-School Partnership
ULCI	The Upper Limit Confident Interval
WoS	Web of Science

Chapter 1 Introduction

This introductory chapter outlines my research journey exploring Chinese UBTEs' professional identity, describes the teacher education system in the Chinese context, and identifies the gaps in research on teacher educator identity. This chapter concludes with how these gaps will be addressed in this thesis and an overview of the structure of the thesis.

1.1 My Journey into This Research

My research journey began by reflecting on my preservice education experience – as a student who majored in education and studied for seven years (four-year undergraduate and three-year masters) in Chinese normal universities that focused on teacher education. I was concerned that I had gained more theoretical knowledge than practical teaching skills, strategies, or experience because my course consisted mainly of educational-related theories, with limited practicum opportunities. Although my undergraduate university was a teaching-oriented normal university that aimed to prepare preschool and primary teachers, most of my classmates learned to become “real” qualified teachers through the practical experience gained in their jobs. As I felt there was a huge gap between what I had learnt and my teaching practice, and I had no confidence in my practical competence, I gave up being a teacher and decided to pursue a masters degree in a top normal university characterised as research-intensive. However, because most of my energy was devoted to taking courses, participating in education-related research, and learning how to publish, the masters' experience drove me further away from teaching practice and towards research and my current PhD programme.

My education experience moved me away from frontline teaching, but by some

miracle, it pushed me toward higher degrees (e.g., masters and doctoral degrees). Therefore, I naturally wanted to follow the career path of my role models (e.g., university teachers and supervisors) who graduated with doctorates and became teacher educators to prepare future teachers and do research in normal universities. Like most of my supervisors in Chinese normal universities, however, I had not worked as a teacher in schools and had only distant practicum experience and limited practical knowledge about school-based teaching and learning. Moreover, higher education institutions (HEIs) in China, including teacher education programmes, are more likely to recruit candidates, with a PhD from a highly ranked English-speaking university and with excellent research records of publication in prestigious journals, despite having little practical experience. The better the normal university, the higher the research requirements. Although I could follow this career path, I still felt uncertain about my ability to be a qualified UBTE due to my limited K-12 teaching experience. As a result, exploring how existing Chinese UBTEs perceive their work, the problems they encounter, and how they engage in professional development became an area of particular interest to me.

I chatted with three Chinese UBTEs to understand possible challenges and supports in their professional lives. Whereas there were some “predictable” work challenges in teaching practical courses, I was most surprised to find that “teacher educator” seemed to be a new and imported concept for them. They appeared to have only a vague understanding of who teacher educators are and what they should do, and viewed their work (i.e., teaching, research, and service) as the same as other academics in universities; they seldom used the

term “teacher educator” to describe themselves. A search of the literature found some helpful articles that suggested taking a role as a UBTE does not automatically lead to a professional identity as a teacher educator (e.g., Amott, 2018; Newberry, 2014). As I read more widely in the field, I gradually became aware of the complex nature of being a UBTE. It was supported that how they see their tasks and themselves might affect what they teach and how they teach (Amott, 2018); and that this could produce a long-term impact on the quality of the next generation of teachers (Atkinson & Delamont, 1990). Consequently, I shifted the focus of my PhD research from examining the work of Chinese UBTEs to exploring their professional identity. Therefore, two overarching questions guide this thesis: 1) How do Chinese UBTEs, who mainly follow academic pathways into their roles, perceive their professional identity; and 2) why do they have these identity perceptions?

Thus, the research for this thesis investigated the identity perceptions of Chinese UBTEs and how they form a professional identity as a teacher educator. Using large-scale qualitative and quantitative data from Chinese UBTEs, including semi-structured interviews and questionnaire responses, the research explores the complexity of Chinese UBTEs’ professional identity.

To provide context for this thesis, Section 1.2 presents the “big picture” of the Chinese teacher education system; Section 1.3 briefly identifies gaps in the existing literature; Section 1.4 summarises how this thesis addresses these gaps; and Section 1.5 concludes with an overview of the thesis structure.

1.2 Understanding Chinese Teacher Education

Chinese education is embedded in, and to some extent is affected by, global educational discourses and reforms (Ye et al., 2019), and characterised by neoliberalism, marketisation, and managerialism (Yuan, 2019). These macro-discourses, which call for standardisation, quality assurance, accountability and performativity assessment (White, 2019), further shape the teacher education ecosystem and provide opportunities and challenges for stakeholders (e.g., teacher educators). This section first presents how the teacher education system in China develops and experiences tensions within these macro-discourses. It then describes how teacher education programmes in China function, who Chinese UBTEs are and how they work.

1.2.1 Teacher Education System in China

The Chinese teacher education system is not isolated from international trends in teacher education – as evident in “universitisation” reforms, research and outcome-oriented performativity (Shi & Englert, 2008; Ye et al., 2019), a turn towards practice and an increase in quality assurance processes (Ye et al., 2019; Zhou & Reed, 2005). The universitisation and research focus emphasises university-based teacher education programmes with theory-oriented content and output. This so-called practice turn highlights that teacher education works for practice, in practice, and from practice (Reid, 2011), and monitors teacher preparation quality. These two discourses, academic and professional, coexist in the Chinese teacher education system, and cause tensions for teacher education programmes and how UBTEs view and do their work.

Chinese teacher education, similar to Europe and New Zealand (Davey, 2013; Hill & Haigh, 2012; Zhou & Zhu, 2005), has experienced the amalgamation and upgrade of teacher education institutions, called “universitisation”, since the 1990s. To restructure and open teacher education systems, and improve the quality of teacher preparation, a series of education policies have been launched in China. Starting with the *Opinions on Adjusting the Structure of Teacher Education Institutions* (Ministry of Education [MoE], 1999) and *Decisions on Deepening Education Reform and Fully Promoting Quality Education* (Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party [CCCCP] & State Council, 1999) and later *Opinions on Deepening Reform of Construction of Teacher Force in the New Era* (State Council, 2018), these measures aimed to lift the quality of teacher education providers and future teachers by merging, upgrading, and amalgamating existing normal institutions (Rao, 2020; Zhou, 2014). “Normal” is used in China to describe institutions that emphasise teacher education. These reforms led to the reduction and even disappearance of lower-level secondary normal schools preparing primary and preschool teachers, the merging and upgrade of normal colleges preparing junior secondary teachers to normal universities preparing high school teachers, and the engagement of comprehensive universities (i.e., institutions offer diverse programmes not just teacher education programmes) in teacher preparation (Shi & Englert, 2008). Consequently, the Chinese teacher education system has experienced changes from a three-level independent system, which included normal universities, normal colleges, and secondary normal schools (Zhu & Hu, 2009), to a two-level open system in which normal universities and colleges act as the main providers; teacher

preparation is situated within comprehensive institutions (Zhu & Li, 2014). This reform has broken the monopoly of normal institutions, encouraged diverse institutions to engage in teacher preparation, and improved the quality of teacher preparation to some extent.

However, doubts have been raised about the de-professionalisation of teacher education programmes (Gao & Liu, 2014; Ye et al., 2019) under “universitisation”. In the university, research audit culture drives teacher education programmes, prioritising research engagement and productivity (Zhou & Reed, 2005), and thus UBTEs’ time is directed away from teaching and teacher preparation (Yuan, 2016, 2017). Research requirements and expectations were further tightened when the “Double First-Class” plan (双一流, first-class universities and first-class disciplines) (State Council, 2015) was implemented to improve the international competitiveness of Chinese education. The state, through this plan, aimed to “construct world-first universities and disciplines; construct first-class teacher force; cultivate innovative talents; improve academic quality...” (State Council, 2015) by selecting and supporting a group of universities and disciplines with financial, resources, and policy support. Research productivity is essential for receiving these rewards and is closely associated with institutional reputation and funding sources; research outputs are central to academics’ (including UBTEs) probationary contracts, salary, tenure, and promotion (Lee, 2014; Yuan, 2017). The “Double First-Class” plan further exacerbates research competition and encourages many normal institutions to pursue research, prioritising research over teaching and practice, which simultaneously weakens its mission to prepare future teachers (Zhu, 2004).

In response to the perceived divide between theoretical knowledge and field experience in teacher preparation (Zeichner, 2010), there has been a shift from over-emphasising theoretical learning within an “ivory tower” to practice-based learning in real-world with pupils (Reid, 2011). The need to change a theory-oriented teacher education curriculum, “divorced from the reality of the school and classroom” (Ye et al., 2019, p. 766), has led Chinese teacher education policy-makers to reform teacher education curricula to become more practice-based; the participation of schools and school mentors, and build university-government-school partnership (U-G-S) has also been encouraged. *Teacher Education Curriculum Standards (Trail)*, issued in 2011, proposed a “practice turn” and advised that “teacher education curricula should enhance practical awareness and pay attention to real problems.” (MoE, 2011a). *Promoting the Reform of Teacher Education Curriculum* (MoE, 2011b) prescribed that: teachers who teach educational courses should have K-12 working experience; schoolteachers employed as adjunct lecturers should comprise at least 20 percent of the teaching force; and preservice teachers should have a school practicum of at least one semester, under the supervision of university supervisors and school mentors. These two documents laid the foundation for a greater emphasis on practice in Chinese teacher education. This required that teacher education programmes should work for, in and from practice, focus on teachers’ practice and practical competency, and research the value of practice on teacher professional development (Wu & Yang, 2019). A new three-way collaboration, called the U-G-S partnership, which aims to utilise local educational agencies’ educational services (G), HEIs’ academic resources (U) and schools’ practice

environment (S) in teacher preparation, is also included in many policy documents (MoE, 2014; State Council, 2012; State Council, 2018). These changes help counter the lack of practice in Chinese teacher education (Ye et al., 2019), but also add challenges to teacher education work, through working between different sites, such as schools, communities, and HEIs, and taking on different roles in different contexts (White, 2019; Yang, 2011).

Moreover, with the associated pressure to excel in global education rankings (e.g., Programme for International Student Assessment, PISA), teachers, as the key to student success, have moved from the periphery to the centre in education policymaking (White, 2019; Whitty & Furlong, 2000). Correspondingly, the higher expectations for the effectiveness of teacher education programmes lead to more regular scrutiny and accountability. Consequently, a relatively comprehensive teacher education quality assurance system has been gradually established in China, which includes: professional standards for K-12 teachers (MoE, 2012), a teacher certificate system, a programme accreditation system (MoE, 2017), a plan for developing excellent teachers (MoE, 2014, 2018), and most recently, the Strong Teacher Plan (MoE et al., 2022). These measures have contributed to improving the quality of graduates and the competitiveness of international education, but placed considerable pressure on teacher education programmes and the work of UBTEs. UBTEs, therefore, are burdened with additional pressure to prepare, collect, and report on performance data (Griffiths et al., 2010; O'Brien & Furlong, 2015). They also have to improve the quality of their teaching, which may conflict with the theory-oriented performance-evaluation systems that underline research engagement and productivity in

higher education context (e.g., Yuan, 2016, 2017).

Academic- and professional-oriented discourses, reflecting university's concern with research (e.g., producing advanced knowledge) and the practically-oriented nature of teacher education work, coexist in the Chinese teacher education system. These internationally recognisable competing macro-discourses impact Chinese teacher education programmes. This creates tensions for UBTEs, and may shape how they work and perceive themselves, as they balance institutional expectations of being research-active and professional expectations about teaching effectively and being role models for future teachers. In the Chinese context, there are no uniform standards describing competencies for UBTEs, unlike in the Netherlands and the USA (Koster & Dengerink, 2008; Chen & Wang, 2012). Therefore, some fundamental questions about Chinese UBTE work remain unclear. Questions such as the qualifications and qualities of Chinese UBTEs, and what should they know and do in their work, remain unanswered. The ambiguity of the expectations and requirements may therefore impact UBTEs' professional identity. UBTEs have to work out their role and professional identity themselves, within the competing discourses of teacher education quality and institutional requirements.

1.2.2 Teacher Education Programmes and UBTEs in China

After "universitisation", Chinese teacher education becomes a university-based and multi-institutional system (Shi & Englert, 2008), consisting of normal colleges, universities, with an emphasis on teacher education, and comprehensive colleges and universities which offer a range of subjects and place less emphasis on teacher preparation. Normal institutions,

the main teacher education providers, usually offer bachelor's (four years) and masters (two years for taught masters, three years for research masters) programmes, and some offer three to four years doctoral programmes (Cao et al., 2019). This study investigating UBTE professional lives focuses on normal universities rather than normal colleges that usually provide undergraduate-level teacher education programmes, because there is less research pressure in these institutions.

There are two types of normal universities: first-class normal universities and provincial normal universities. First-class normal universities are research-oriented and are often affiliated with the Ministry of Education. They offer high-level teacher education with a national and international outlook; they act as a model for other teacher education institutions, and aim to prepare excellent teachers as researchers (Gong et al., 2021). Provincial normal universities are teaching-oriented, usually under the supervision of provincial education departments, and deliver professional and vocational courses to prepare qualified teachers and solve teaching shortage issues in specific provinces (Ping et al., 2021). Teacher education programmes are usually provided in the faculty of education (or school of education, institution of education (see Ye et al., 2019)), and/or subject-matter departments (e.g., maths, English, chemistry) depending on the organization and context. The curriculum differs slightly across HEIs, but common courses include general courses (e.g., English, computer, political education), pedagogical courses (e.g., education philosophy, history, psychology), subject matter courses, and practicum (Cao et al., 2019; Gong et al., 2021).

There are two types of UBTEs in China: subject UBTEs, with subject backgrounds,

usually teach subject matter courses, and general UBTEs, who have expertise in education rather than specific discipline, usually teach teacher education-related courses (e.g., pedagogy). General UBTEs often comprise the majority of the teacher educator workforce in China (Zhao, 2014), differing from most UBTEs from discipline backgrounds in other jurisdictions, and they become the focus of this research. Regardless of the type, Chinese UBTEs usually progress directly from being doctoral students or academics to teacher education teaching and research; this process is often termed an “academic pathway” (Davey, 2013, p. 46). Compared to UBTEs in other jurisdictions such as England, Australia, and New Zealand, who have typically taken a “practitioner pathway”, having worked as certified and experienced schoolteachers (Boyd & Harris, 2010; Davey, 2013, p. 47; Murray & Male, 2005), Chinese UBTEs hold higher degrees (e.g., PhD) and have research experience and strong research records, but have limited or no systematic knowledge of school teaching and learning. Therefore, they learn to be qualified teacher educators mainly on the job (Yuan, 2016, 2017). Teacher education involves multiple tasks: teaching pedagogical courses to general university students or subject matter courses, research, practicum supervision, student supervision, administrative work, and community service (Gong et al., 2021). Teaching and research are typically the two key responsibilities of Chinese UBTEs. Owing to the distinctive institutional orientations of teacher preparation goals between first-class normal universities and provincial normal universities, Chinese UBTEs at each institution type face different imperatives and incentives with more teaching in provincial normal universities and more research in first-class normal universities (Cao et al., 2019). This may shape their work

engagement and whether they view themselves more as researchers or more as teachers.

The cultural, national and institutional differences in teacher education and UBTE work means that research on UBTE's professional identity needs to take account of the context where it occurs, and the specific pressures and requirements that arise. Thus, the present study investigated UBTEs' professional identity, and factors that may influence the development of identity in the Chinese context, in different types of universities, in which teacher education is based and the academic pathway to UBTE work is common.

1.3 Teacher Educators' Professional Identity

This section presents how I define UBTE professional identity through the lens of identity theory (see Chapter 2, section 2.2), and identifies issues to be addressed arising from the existing literature.

1.3.1 UBTEs' Professional Identity

UBTEs are those who engage in the formal development and learning of preservice and in-service teachers (Snoek et al., 2011) in higher education contexts. They play an important role in preparing the next generation of teachers and influence the development of in-service teachers, and are believed to be the core of quality teacher education programmes (Atkinson & Delamont, 1985; Koster et al., 2005; Vloet & Van Swet, 2010). However, far less attention has been paid to the professional lives of UBTEs, compared to those of preservice and in-service teachers (Davey, 2013; Vloet & Van Swet, 2010). UBTEs, therefore, are described as an "under-researched, poorly understood, and ill-defined occupational group" (Murray & Male, 2005, p. 125), with their voices neglected in teacher

education research (S. White et al., 2020).

Although studies about UBTEs' professional expertise (Berry, 2007), professional practice (Cao et al., 2019; Yamin-Ali, 2018), and professional development and learning (Cochran-Smith et al., 2020; Ping et al., 2021) are now emerging, there is a lack of research focusing on how UBTEs perceive themselves in their work, that is, their professional identity (Swennen et al., 2008; Zeichner, 2005). Drawing on identity theory (with the main ideas from Sheldon Stryker, Richard T. Serpe, and Jan E. Stets, see Chapter 2), UBTE professional identity is defined in this thesis as a shared set of meanings attached to UBTEs' position as a teacher educator; that is, UBTEs understand who they are professionally through internalising the social norms and external expectations of their multiple tasks and social networks. UBTE professional identity is important and recognised as "a central process in becoming a teacher educator" (Izadinia, 2014, p. 427), as it can: (re)shape UBTEs' sense of commitment to work (McAnulty & Cuenca, 2014); guide their work engagement and professional development (Amott, 2018; Cochran-Smith, 2003; S. White et al., 2020); affect how teacher education programmes function and how preservice and in-service teachers develop their professional beliefs, teacher identity, and professional learning (Boyd & Harris, 2010; Murray & Male, 2005; Yuan, 2019) in the long run.

A professional identity does not automatically form on taking up a professional role as a UBTE (Amott, 2018). Because of the complexity of the role, such as working between schools and universities, developing professional relationships with diverse stakeholders (e.g., schoolteachers, preservice teachers), balancing multiple roles and identities, and

inadequate external support (Dinkelman et al., 2006a; Murray & Male, 2005; Yamin-Ali, 2018), new UBTEs often encounter difficulties in identity formation. Therefore, being a UBTE is complex and contestable (Williams et al., 2012) and involves more than taking a job title (Dinkelman et al., 2006a). Greater attention to understanding how UBTEs perceive themselves in their work, the challenges they face, and the professional development activities that may support their practice, could help develop UBTEs who are in turn able to develop the teachers needed by education systems.

1.3.2 The Research Gaps

As I read more widely in this area, I gradually became aware of the research gaps that need to be addressed concerning UBTE professional identity, the focus of this thesis. This section briefly summarises these gaps; more detailed information is provided in the literature chapter (Chapter 3) and each study (Chapters 5-7).

1.3.2.1 A Different Pathway and Under-Researched Context

The investigation of UBTE professional identity originated largely in Europe, North America, and Australia (Izadinia, 2014). Research has focused on how UBTEs experience the transition from schoolteachers to teacher educators, how they struggle with different contexts between schools and universities, and how they manage “second-order” teaching (Murray & Male, 2005, p. 126) and research requirements (e.g., Boyd & Harris, 2010; Swennen et al., 2008; White, 2014; Williams, 2014). This process of becoming a UBTE, in which UBTEs enter into teacher education having had practical teaching experience in schools (Griffiths et al., 2010), has been termed the “practitioner pathway” (Davey, 2013, p. 47). There is little

research, however, on the professional identity of UBTEs, who hold higher degrees but have limited or no school teaching experience (Newberry, 2014), described as the “academic pathway” (Davey, 2013, p. 46). Different pathways and transition experiences might make a difference in how UBTEs perceive themselves, what they do in their work, and what they need for professional learning (Czerniawski et al., 2017; White, 2019). As shown in section 1.2, China is an example of a context where academic-pathway UBTEs constitute most of the teacher educator workforce (Gong et al., 2021; Ping et al., 2021). As the stories of UBTEs from academic pathways are less frequently heard, this thesis examines the applicability of previous findings about practitioner pathway UBTEs to UBTEs from an academic pathway from a different culture and career trajectory in China. This knowledge would extend research on UBTE identity, enlighten teacher education programmes where academic pathways are common, and provide opportunities for researchers and practitioners to communicate and collaborate based on potential commonalities of UBTE work and identity between the two groups.

1.3.2.2 Boundaries and Relationships Among Identities

Previous research has frequently explored UBTE professional identity as holistic (e.g., Diamond et al., 2021; Hayler & Williams, 2018; Trent, 2013; Williams & Berry, 2016), without considering the complex and multiple components (or sub-identities) that might be presented in UBTE professional identity. An increasing number of studies detail several aspects of being a UBTE, including teacher-of-teachers, researcher, and teacher in higher education (e.g., Smith & Flores, 2019; Swennen et al., 2010). However, there are ambiguous

boundaries between these multiple sub-identities, such as overlapping definitions between being a teacher educator and being a teacher-of-teachers (Swennen et al., 2010), and between a teacher educator and a teacher (Swennen et al., 2008). More studies are needed to explore if the different aspects of UBTE work lead to UBTEs holding several sub-identities and to understand the boundaries between these sub-identities. In addition, there is little empirical investigation of the relationship (Burke, 2003) among these parts of UBTE professional identity, leaving a gap for further research. Furthermore, perspectives from a form of identity theory (Stets & Serpe, 2013; Stryker, 2002) suggest that each sub-identity is organised in a hierarchy and in competition with each other. Therefore, examining which identity is the most salient and how these sub-identities interact, either conflict or collaborate, might help us understand how UBTEs use their time and energy and perceive themselves as teacher educators (Czerniawski, 2018).

1.3.2.3 Small-Scale Qualitative-Oriented Studies

Whereas most studies examine UBTE professional identity perceptions and formation through qualitative-oriented methods (e.g., interview, self-study, case study, or narrative inquiry), large-scale quantitative surveys or mixed research methods are scarce (Dengerink et al., 2015). Despite the rich stories of UBTE professional identity provided by these existing studies, small-scale qualitative data presents mainly individuals' experience of being a UBTE in a specific situation, and may not apply to UBTEs with different backgrounds and in other contexts (Sleeter, 2001). Quantitative or mixed research methods could help develop culture-specific instruments, identify and examine the relationships between variables revealed in

previous qualitative studies, and test hypotheses and theories. Quantitative or mixed research methods would extend qualitative findings into a larger population or context, and provide verifiable outcomes for future studies of UBTE professional identity. Therefore, more quantitative or mixed research methods studies are needed to investigate the formation mechanisms of UBTE professional identity.

1.4 Thesis Objectives

Using qualitative and quantitative data, this thesis empirically investigates the self-reported nature of Chinese UBTE professional identity, and why Chinese UBTEs perceive their roles in certain ways. It aims to work in the aforementioned research gaps in UBTE identity research and provide a deeper understanding of the professional identity of UBTEs in China. These concerns have driven the research process and structured the thesis.

This thesis starts with a systematic review (Chapter 3, Liang et al., 2023c) of 63 studies on UBTE identities and how they are formed. These studies, published over the last 15 years, provide a comprehensive understanding of current achievements in UBTE identity research, identify key research gaps, and suggest potential future research directions. The research gaps that emerged from the review (see sections 1.3.2 and 3.3) were developed into two overarching research questions on how Chinese UBTEs, who mainly follow academic pathways into their roles, perceive their professional identity, and why they have these identity perceptions. These are followed by several sub-research questions (e.g., whether these sub-identities are similar or different in first-class normal universities and provincial normal universities). These questions are the basis of the three increasingly-specific empirical

studies that constitute the main body of this thesis.

Due to the paucity of research about academic-pathway UBTE professional identity, study one (Chapter 5, Liang et al., 2023a) was designed to examine who Chinese UBTEs think they are professionally. This study investigated the similarities or differences of these sub-identities in first-class normal universities and provincial normal universities, thus providing a comparison of identity perceptions across contexts.

Study two (Chapter 6, Liang et al., 2023b) was then conducted to address the multi-layered and competing nature of UBTE identity. Of interest was how UBTEs value and reconcile different elements of professional identity, whether they hold a salient sub-identity, what challenges UBTEs face in balancing various roles and sub-identities, and what shapes their salient identity perceptions.

Based on the findings from the first two studies, study three (Chapter 7, Liang et al., 2023d), informed by identity theory (Stryker, 2002), was to investigate why Chinese UBTEs have these perceptions by examining how factors of interest from the previous two studies related to UBTEs' identity. Findings from the first two chapters were used to develop hypotheses about UBTE identity formation that were tested using a large-scale survey and quantitative analysis methods.

The purpose of this thesis is fourfold:

1. To *give voice to an under-researched group* – academic-pathway UBTEs – in teacher education, taking the Chinese context as an example, letting them be seen, receive more

attention, and claim their legitimate membership and belonging in the education community.

2. To empirically understand *how Chinese UBTEs see the world of teacher education and themselves under competing macro-discourses and inside the complex teacher education ecosystem*, reveal the complexity and challenges of being a Chinese UBTE, and propose implications for supporting UBTEs' work and identity development.
3. To explore the *applicability of identity theory* (see Chapter 2) as a framework for UBTE professional identity research, and *advance* this theory by empirically testing the role of self-efficacy in identity formation to address the gap in de-emphasising “the effect of individuals' thoughts, feelings, and actions on the organization of their own and others' lives” (Thoits, 2003, p. 182).
4. To call for *academic and practice dialogues* across institutions and contexts, based on the core and consistent elements of UBTE professional identity and the nature of UBTE work, to solve global issues (e.g., teaching-research conflicts) collaboratively.

1.5 Thesis Overview

This thesis consists of eight chapters. Chapter 2 conceptualises identity from symbolic interactionist perspectives, underlines the theoretical rationale for analysing UBTE professional identity via the lens of identity theory, and elaborates how identity theory is linked to research questions and used to guide research design. Chapter 3 comprises a systematic review of the literature on UBTE identities and relevant influential factors based on 63 studies published over the past 15 years. It has been developed into a journal article

(Liang et al., 2023c) and sent out for peer review, together with a review of research on UBTE identity published in Chinese. This chapter presents the major findings of the most recent literature on UBTE identity. It describes the early stage of UBTE identity research in the Chinese context, identifies key research gaps, and how this thesis tackles these gaps through three studies guided by specific research questions. Literature specific to each study is presented in their respective chapters (Chapters 5-7). Chapter 4 gives a description of the methodology used in this thesis, including the research paradigm, pragmatism, how pragmatism informs the exploratory mixed research method and specific research methods in the three studies, and the key ethical considerations associated with this research.

Chapters 5 to 7 include individual journal articles for three empirical studies conducted in this research and submitted to academic journals. Chapter 5 (study one, Liang et al., 2023a) examines the complex components of the professional identity of Chinese UBTEs, mainly from academic pathways, as well as the distribution of identity categories between participants from two types of normal universities. Chapter 6 (study two, Liang et al., 2023b), follows study one to investigate the relationships between each sub-identity of Chinese UBTEs: how UBTEs value and reconcile different elements of professional identity; how different sub-identities play out for an individual; and the tensions and challenges UBTE may encounter forming and balancing various sub-identities. Chapter 7 (study three, Liang et al., 2023d) is the final study of this research. Guided by identity theory, it reports large-scale quantitative findings, testing the associations between key factors and salient identity perceptions that emerged from the previous two studies. Due to the nature of a thesis with

publications, some elements are repeated, particularly in the literature review and research context sections. Each chapter, however, discusses these elements with different emphases related to the specific research questions of each study.

Chapter 8 integrates the findings from three studies as a whole, and provides an overall summary and discussion of the key findings; it points out the limitations before discussing the implications for UBTE identity research, teacher education policy, teacher education programmes and UBTEs. The chapter closes with an overall conclusion pertaining to this doctoral project.

Chapter 2 Theoretical Framework

The previous chapter explained the importance of understanding UBTEs' professional identity in the Chinese context. To clarify what identity means in this thesis and provide the theoretical rationale for the research design, this chapter first explains symbolic interactionism, the perspective on identity used throughout the thesis (section 2.1). A detailed description of how identity theory, as a derived theory of symbolic interactionism, informs this thesis to understand and research identity is then presented (section 2.2). This chapter ends with an explanation of how identity theory is linked to the research questions and is used to guide research design (section 2.3) within this thesis.

2.1 The Symbolic Interactionism Perspective

Identity refers to peoples' responses to questions like "who are you" (Vignoles et al., 2011). The term "identity" has been used in complex, fragmented, and intertwined ways within philosophy, psychology, sociology and psychotherapy (Davey, 2013). There are three main perspectives on identity in the literature on education: the developmental psychology, sociology, and discursive approaches (Davey, 2013) propose different emphases and assumptions about both the nature and construction of identity. One of the key differences among these three perspectives is the identity level, individual, relational or collective, on which researchers centre (Vignoles et al., 2011). Developmental psychology focuses on the individual level of self-identification (e.g., self-esteem, beliefs, values), and views identity as the outcome of an internal discovery while highlighting individual independence and agency in forming an identity (Côté & Schwartz, 2002; Waterman, 2011). However, sociological and

discursive approaches consider identity a relational or collective phenomenon affected by social and cultural contexts. When identity is viewed as a relational phenomenon, identity formation is not only established by individuals, but is also defined and affected by social interactions; individuals can internalise external expectations and shared meanings of their roles into their self-conceptions (Kuhn, 1964; Stryker, 2002). Identity as a collective phenomenon refers to the extent to which individuals view themselves as members of a social group or category, such as gender (Steensma et al., 2013), ethnicity (Burton, 2000), and nationality (Alcoff & Mendieta, 2003). Attributing identity to an individual, relational, or collective phenomenon will affect how researchers define the content of identity (e.g., personal traits, role identity, or social identity) and review the impact of individuals, interpersonal relationships, and social factors on identity formation.

This research examines how Chinese UBTEs, who mainly follow academic pathways into their roles, perceive themselves as teacher educators, that is their professional identity, and so involves their responses to diverse meanings attached to different positions or roles they have in their work, such as teaching, research, service, and practicum supervision. As this research emphasises professional work and role-related identity, it is in line with the sociological perspective on viewing identity as a relational phenomenon, and it is positioned within the symbolic interactionism perspective on identity theory.

The symbolic interactionism perspective (Blumer, 1969; Kuhn, 1964), as the main root of identity theory (details in section 2.2), suggests that society and self are the products of social interactions through which shared meanings are captured, and that society is the

foundation for constructing the self and how people perceive themselves further guides their behaviours (Heise, 1986; Kuhn, 1964). Symbolic interactionists also consider the impact of personal agency (Stryker, 2002, p. 6), indicating that humans are active and creative agents who can create and change social structures through their views and actions rather than being passively (re)shaped by social forces (McCall George & Simmons, 1978). Symbolic interactionism provides a lens for understanding identity formation as shaped mainly by interpersonal and social structural factors without neglecting personal agency. In this research, this perspective is important because working as a UBTE involves multiple roles and social relationships with schoolteachers, preservice teachers, and colleagues embedded in a social structure. In these structures, such as groups and organisations, they might learn what it means to be a teacher educator, internalise these meanings into their perceptions, which, in turn, influence their actions. Meanwhile, UBTEs' personal goals, experience, and agency might also influence their identity formation and behaviour choice. Using a symbolic interactionism perspective, this research aims to investigate the nature of UBTE professional identity and reveal the extent to which UBTE identity perceptions respond to their social networks, social structure, and individual factors.

As the understanding of symbolic interactionism developed, due to different understandings of the role and status of society, and of the use of prior theory or the creation of a theory, it evolved gradually into two branches, traditional symbolic interactionism and structural symbolic interactionism (Burke & Stets, 2009). Traditional symbolic interactionists propose that society is the outcome of constructed social interaction with the role of status of

society viewed as fluid, negotiated, and temporary, as it forms or breaks up when individuals enter or depart from social networks (Blumer, 1969; Cooley, 1902; Harris, 2001). If society is the mirror in which individuals can see themselves (Stryker, 1977), self-conceptions are therefore seen as unstable, unorganised, and changeable. However, structural symbolic interactionists argue that society becomes patterned and organised once it is built from social interactions and it, in turn, influences the possibility of individuals entering and leaving further interactions (Burawoy, 1979; Kuhn, 1964). Therefore, society, in the form of groups, communities, and institutions, shapes how individuals view themselves and what they do (Stryker, 1980). If personal goals are aligned with social structures, their personal goals, current interactions and social structure will be enhanced (Burke & Stets, 2009); otherwise, interaction and individuals may be constrained by existing norms, expectations, and resource allocation.

Regarding the use of prior theory or the creation of a theory, traditional symbolic interactionism postulates that the relationships between social structure, social interaction, individual views and actions cannot be measured and predicted reliably, because they are unstable and fluid, and can only be described and interpreted deeply (Burke & Stets, 2009). Thus, the prior theory developed in one situation cannot be applied to other unique situations, and so a theory-based explanation of individual views and actions cannot be established. In contrast, structural symbolic interactionists argue that social relationships, identities, and behaviours are (re)constructed by patterned social structures (Burawoy, 1979; Kuhn, 1964). These assumptions highlight the relatively stable and core self, acknowledge the causality of

the social structures and make predicting internal concepts and actions empirically possible (Stryker, 1980), further supporting the derivation of identity theory (details in section 2.2).

For this thesis investigating the nature and influences of Chinese UBTEs' professional identity, it is reasonable to assume that UBTEs learn how to be teacher educators through interacting with others. For example, interacting with schoolteachers, colleagues, and preservice teachers gives meaning to UBTEs' work and teaches them what they are expected to do in different contexts, such as school settings, research projects, and classrooms. Meanwhile, HEIs with long histories, traditions, norms, and organisational orientations, in which UBTEs work, can also constrain or support their behaviours and identity development. As the institutional structure in which UBTEs work, and the professional relationships, are relatively stable and organised, these phenomena are more likely to be closely related to structural symbolic interactionism than traditional symbolic interactionism. Therefore structural symbolic interactionism has been chosen as the theoretical perspective of this research.

2.2 The Key Concepts of Identity Theory

Derived from structural symbolic interactionism (Burke & Stets, 2009), the main elements of identity theory include social structure, social interaction, self, action, and agent. The premise of identity theory is that: society is structured and organised; the self reflects society; the self affects behaviours; and individuals are both reactors and actors. These assumptions can be summarised as “society–self–behaviour” (Serpe & Stryker, 2011). Identity theory views identity as a bridge between individuals and society, indicating that

joint roles of social structure and individuals are considered to impact individual views and actions (Burke & Stets, 2009). However, aspects of identity formation, both individual control and social structure, are emphasised differently among identity theorists, of which there are three branches: interactional emphasis (McCall, 2003; McCall & Simmons, 1978), structural emphasis (Serpe & Stryker, 2011; Stryker, 1980, 2001; Stryker et al., 2005; Stryker & Serpe, 1982; Thoits, 2003), and perceptual control emphasis (Burke, 2003; Burke & Stets, 2009; Stets & Burke, 2000).

More specifically, McCall and Simmons (1978) emphasise how identity and behaviour emerge from social interactions, for example, how negotiation, rewards, and costs that individuals experience in interactions affect their identities and actions (McCall, 2003). The key concept of this branch is role identity, referring to individuals' views of themselves as "being and acting as an occupant" in a societal position (McCall & Simmons, 1978, p. 65). The role aspect of role identity means that conventional and external expectations are attached to the positions that individuals take, and the identity aspect of role identity means that individuals attach personal meanings to their roles (McCall & Simmons, 1978). McCall and Simmons suggest that individuals have multiple role identities organised in a hierarchy within the self; of which the most important identity for individuals, based on personal ideals and desires, is termed the prominent identity. McCall and Simmons also propose "identity salience" that differs from "identity prominence". Identity salience is "the person's own preferences as to the subset of role identities he (sic) will enact in a given situation", which implies external expectations of identity formation (McCall & Simmons, 1978, p. 84).

Compared to emphasising the ideal aspect of identity (i.e., identity prominence) and the impact of interaction, Stryker and his colleagues concentrate on the conventional aspect of identity, identity salience, which refers to the possibilities of invoking an identity across situations. They also identify the impact of social structures on identity and behaviour, such as how external expectations, norms, and demands shape identity perception (Serpe & Stryker, 2011). In contrast with the above two branches (McCall & Simmons, 1978; Stryker, 1980, 2001), Burke highlights the role of individual control and the internal process of identity verification (Burke & Stets, 2009) within a meaning system. This branch posits that individuals establish a conceptual meaning of identity, compare it with the standard meaning of identity, and eventually achieve identity verification or perform behaviours in accordance with the resulting identity (Burke & Stets, 2009). In this study, Stryker's identity theory is used because this research: 1) does not focus on the ideal aspect of UBTE professional identity as McCall and Simmons's identity theory does, and 2) explores UBTE professional identity, closely related to UBTE professional lives (i.e., work and roles), rather than individual perceptual control as in Burker's identity theory. The basis of the decision to draw on Stryker's identity theory in this thesis will be explained in detail below, with further description of Stryker's identity theory.

The central concept of Stryker's identity theory is role identity (simply termed identity by Serpe, 1987; Stets & Serpe, 2013; Stryker & Serpe, 1982), which differs from a personal identity as a purely subjective concept, and from a role entirely defined by external expectations (Callero, 1985). Role identity, or identity, is defined by Stryker and his

colleagues as a set of internalised meanings attached to a specific role that an individual occupies in society (Serpe & Stryker, 2011; Stets & Serpe, 2013). They argue that roles facilitate and constrain identity via behavioural expectations, rights, and responsibilities; and that identity develops as individuals accept, reject, negotiate, and internalise the meanings connected with their roles and the structured relationships in which they become involved (Serpe & Stryker, 2011; Pinnegar, 2005). Thus, individuals might claim more than one role identity (Serpe & Stryker, 2011), indicating that individuals usually have multiple role identities that are multi-faceted components of self, and that the self consists of various identities. However, it does not mean that each role identity is equally relevant to individuals. Stryker's identity theory argues that these multiple role identities are conceived as organised in a hierarchy within the self, and that some are more salient to individuals than others (Stryker, 1980). The higher a specific role identity is in a person's hierarchy, the more salient is this role identity (i.e., identity salience, Stets & Serpe, 2013), and it will be more likely evoked in a particular situation or various situations (Serpe & Stryker, 2011).

In terms of identity formation, Stryker's identity theory pays attention to the role of social structure; they assert that society shapes the self, further affecting behaviours (Serpe & Stryker, 2011). More specifically, society is viewed as multi-level and nested, and that it includes large (e.g., gender, ethnicity, region), intermediate (e.g., organisations, groups), and proximate (e.g., social interactions) levels (Stryker et al., 2005). Individuals capture the meanings, norms, and behavioural expectations of their roles in relatively small and specified social relationships that are nested in and affected by larger groups, communities, and

organisations across the structures of gender, region, and ethnicity (Stryker, 2001). They postulate that if society is patterned and structured with different levels, individual ideas and actions are not random but shaped by social positions and social interactions (Stryker & Burke, 2000).

To date, empirical research, based on Stryker's identity theory, has been applied to investigate blood-donor role identity (Callero, 1985), religious role identity (Stryker & Serpe, 1982), and family identity salience (Savard, 2023). Less is known about the applicability of this theory in the teacher education field to examine the nature and influences of UBTE professional identity. Based on Stryker's identity theory, this study explores how UBTEs perceive themselves as professionals, which sub-identity is more salient to them, and what influences their identity perceptions.

2.3 Theoretical Implications for UBTE Professional Identity Research

As discussed in section 2.2, this research is grounded in Stryker's (2001) perspectives on identity, positing that society impacts the self which then impacts behaviour, that is, "society-self-behaviour". Since the nature of, and the influences on, UBTE professional identity are the focus of this research, the aspect of the relationship operationalised by how social structure impacts identity is explored rather than the aspect of the relationship operationalised by how identity impacts behaviour. Table 2.1 shows how Stryker's identity theory is linked to the research questions and used to frame the research design. The first column presents the overarching research questions. The second column outlines the key concepts from Stryker's Identity theory used in this study. These concepts inform the sub-

questions addressed in each empirical study, as presented in the third column. The fourth column elucidates how identity theory is used to guide the research design. How Stryker's identity theory was applied in specific studies is elaborated in the papers presented as Chapters 5-7.

Table 2.1

The Implications of Identity Theory in UBTE Professional Identity Research.

RQs	Stryker's Identity theory	Sub-RQs	Research design
How do Chinese UBTEs, who mainly follow academic pathways into their roles, perceive their professional identity?	Individuals usually have multiple role identities that are multi-faceted components of self (Serpe & Stryker, 2011)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do Chinese UBTEs perceive their professional identity? • To what extent are these sub-identities similar and different in first-class normal universities and provincial normal universities? 	Study One Qualitative, exploratory <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple and complex components of UBTE professional identity
Why do they have these identity perceptions?	Multiple role identities are conceived as organised in a hierarchy within the self. Identity salience is the likelihood of a role identity being evoked in particular or various situations (Serpe & Stryker, 2011) Influential mechanism: Society shapes self (Stryker, 2002)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What elements of Chinese UBTEs' professional identity are most salient? • What are the main influences that shape their salient sub-identities? • To what extent do these salient sub-identities and influences differ between university types? 	Study Two Qualitative, exploratory <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-layered nature of UBTE professional identity • Influential factors of salient sub-identity
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do institutional demand and support, social relationships, and self-efficacy influence Chinese 	Study Three Quantitative generalisation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Influential factors of

UBTEs' salient sub-identities as a teacher-of-teachers and a researcher?	salient sub-identity • Verify and enrich Stryker's identity theory
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The first overarching question, which asks, *How Chinese UBTEs, who mainly follow academic pathways into their roles, perceive their professional identity*, centres on the nature of UBTE professional identity (i.e., how UBTEs understand themselves as professionals). Following Stryker's identity theory, UBTE identity is defined as a set of shared meanings attached to the professional role as a UBTE. As UBTEs have multiple relationships, roles, and responsibilities (Stryker & Serpe, 1982) in teaching, research, and service, their identity perceptions develop as UBTEs identify with, and internalise, these social norms and expectations. UBTE professional identity thus is multi-faceted, indicating that UBTE professional identity consists of several aspects or facets. Other researchers refer to them as sub-identities (Swennen et al., 2010); and include teacher-of-teachers, researcher, and teacher in higher education (Smith & Flores, 2019; Kaasila et al., 2023). However, existing research has paid little attention to the multiple and complex components of UBTE professional identity. This is particularly evident in the Chinese context, in which the academic pathway is common, unlike UBTEs in other jurisdictions, who usually start their careers as schoolteachers (see section 1.3.2). Therefore, how academic pathway UBTEs in the Chinese context perceive themselves and what their professional identity comprises remains unclear. Based on Stryker's identity theory, this research starts with an exploratory study via a qualitative method and uses an inductive and interpretive approach to reveal the complex components of being a Chinese UBTE (study one, Chapter 5, Liang et al., 2023a) and to

develop empirically grounded identity concepts of identity theory in the teacher education field.

Once multiple sub-identities of UBTE professional identity are established in study one, study two (Liang et al., 2023b) is further underpinned by the concept of identity salience, from Stryker's identity theory, that these multiple sub-identities are not equally relevant for individuals but are considered as hierarchical (Serpe & Stryker, 2011). It means that UBTE professional identity is multi-layered; some aspects of UBTE professional identity may be more dominant than others (Beijaard et al., 2004; Davey, 2013), and are more likely to be invoked and enacted across settings in which UBTEs work, such as practicum, course, and workshops. Study two, which aims to respond to the questions on *how Chinese UBTEs perceive their professional identity*, is also informed by Stryker's (2001) identity theory, and explores the multi-layered nature of being a Chinese UBTE. Follow-up research questions elicit which element is more salient, or relevant, for individuals, and how these sub-identities interact with each other for UBTEs in their workplace (see Table 2.1). As there is little research on the relationships and boundaries between identities (see section 1.3.2), study two (Chapter 6) takes an exploratory qualitative approach to understanding UBTEs' salient sub-identities, and how they are organised. To answer the second main research question about *why UBTEs have these identity perceptions*, study two further investigates the multiple influences, for example, social, interpersonal, or individual factors, of UBTEs' salient sub-identity and provides empirical evidence for the applicability of identity theory in UBTE identity research.

Although study two examines *why they have these identity perceptions* using qualitative methods, how these influences interact with each other and work on UBTE identity remains unclear. Whereas quantitative methods (e.g., Grobgeld et al., 2016; Pellegrino et al., 2018, see section 1.3.2) can capture a large-scale pattern of UBTE identity formation, most research into the influences on UBTE identity has been mainly qualitative (e.g., self-studies, Lunenberg & Hamilton, 2008; Williams, 2014). Stryker's identity theory can support testing hypotheses about the relationship between social structure and identity. To understand why Chinese UBTEs have these perceptions, a quantitative examination (study three, Chapter 7), based on Stryker's identity theory, integrated the qualitative results of study two on salient sub-identities and influences reported by UBTEs, to test hypotheses about how organisational structure, interpersonal factors, and individual factors work in forming UBTEs' formation. The findings from study three (Liang et al., 2023d) may provide insights for other jurisdictions where academic pathways are common, or those whose policies are shifting teacher education in that direction. The findings also provide support for the relevance of Stryker's identity theory in the teacher education field and advance this conception of identity theory by examining the role of individual factors in identity formation that have not yet been empirically tested (Thoits, 2003).

Chapter 3 Literature Review

This chapter reviews previous studies on UBTE identity. The first section (section 3.1) presents a systematic review of the literature on UBTE identities and how they are formed based on 63 studies published over the past 15 years (Liang et al., 2023c), providing an international perspective of the most recent UBTE identity literature. This review reveals the complex nature and multiple components of UBTE professional identity and enhances understanding of what factors shape UBTE identity perceptions. Specifically, three major educational databases are explored to conduct a two-phase screening (i.e., title and abstract screening and full-text screening) following the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-analyses (PRISMA) guidelines. After reviewing the characteristics of UBTE identity research in terms of national distribution and methods used, sub-identities of UBTE professional identity and the supports or constraints on developing UBTE identities are discovered in the literature. This section concludes with the implications, limitations, and conclusions of this review.

In the second section (section 3.2), research on UBTE identity published in Chinese is reviewed to uncover the early stage of UBTE identity research in this context, and to underscore the importance of conducting the present research. Finally, this chapter concludes with a summary of the current literature, identifies relevant gaps in UBTE identity research in international and Chinese contexts, and then describes how this thesis will tackle these gaps in three studies under the overarching research questions (see section 3.3). Taken together, this chapter reviews the previous studies on UBTE identity from a general perspective;

literature related to each of the research questions is introduced with each study in Chapters 5-7.

3.1 Understanding the Professional Identity of University-Based Teacher Educators: A Systematic Review of the Literature

Abstract

Despite increasing interest in university-based teacher educators (UBTEs)' professional expertise and development, their professional identity remains under-researched. This systematic review of the literature on the nature of UBTEs' professional identity and how they are formed analyses 63 studies published from 2005 to June 2021. We found that UBTEs' professional identity has gained considerable attention in North American and European contexts, and most empirical studies were primarily based on self-reported, small-scale, and qualitative data. UBTEs' identities emerging from this work include research-, teacher-, expert- and learner-oriented identities. Individual, interpersonal, institutional and social factors shape UBTEs' identities, suggesting that UBTEs' identity formation is complex and contested. Recommendations for future research, teacher educators, and teacher education programmes are suggested.

Keywords: University-based teacher educator; Professional identity; Sub-identities; Identity formation; Influential factors

3.1.1 Introduction

Teacher educators, those who teach preservice teachers to be teachers in education settings (Murray & Male, 2005; Snoek et al., 2011), include three main subgroups based on different positions and contexts: university-based, school-based, and community-based teacher educators (White, 2019; Zeichner et al., 2016). Their work is regarded as a significant instrument of the social (re)production of teaching (Snoek et al., 2011; Kaasila et al., 2023), and is associated with the quality of new teachers in education settings. University-based teacher educators (UBTEs) have been recognised as the dominant group, because “they dictate the frames and the content of teacher education” (Lejonberg & Christophersen, 2015, p. 281) and are the people who do the majority of teacher education worldwide. However, teacher education has been described as an ill-defined profession, and less is known about what it is like to work as a UBTE than working as a schoolteacher or a higher education academic more generally (Murray & Male, 2005; Davey, 2013). There is more to be learned about their professional expertise (Goodwin et al., 2014), workplace practice (Yamin-Ali, 2018), and professional development (White et al., 2020). Because many UBTEs move to teacher education after being a teacher, there are ambiguous boundaries between being a UBTE and being a teacher (Swennen et al., 2010; Kaasila et al., 2023). Research suggests that UBTEs take time to work out their professional identity, with negative effects on UBTEs’ emotions and retention (Yuan, 2020). Understanding how UBTEs perceive their professional identity and what factors facilitate or constrain their identity development could help to understand UBTEs’ lived experience and work engagement, help them identify professional

development needs (Swennen et al., 2010), and, in turn, support preservice teachers' professional learning (Boyd & Harris, 2010).

UBTE professional identity refers to how UBTEs perceive themselves as professionals. Identity is a concept with multiple definitions arising from different theoretical paradigms. This study follows Stryker and his colleagues' work (Stryker & Vryan, 2006; Serpe & Stryker, 2011) in defining identity as a set of shared meanings associated with the roles people occupy in society. This view of identity has its origins in sociology, mainly symbolic interactionism. Stryker and his colleagues' (Stryker & Vryan, 2006; Serpe & Stryker, 2011) approach suggests that UBTE professional identity is multi-faceted and could comprise several sub-identities (Swennen et al., 2010; Kaasila et al., 2023) related to the multiple roles and social relationships UBTEs engage in their work. For example, a research role might lead to a researcher identity. In this framework, professional identity as a UBTE comprises a set of sub-identities. For individuals, some of these sub-identities become dominant, while others are peripheral. Becoming a UBTE is a complex process (Newberry, 2014). Whereas UBTEs might (re)construct their professional identity over time while in the role (Dinkelman et al., 2006a), taking up a specific role does not automatically develop into a corresponding sub-identity (Murray & Male, 2005). UBTEs may not form some sub-identities even if these sub-identities are available to them; the formation of UBTE professional identity and sub-identities is affected by multiple factors, ranging from personal preferences to contextual settings (Swennen et al., 2010).

Although some review articles (e.g., Izadinia, 2014) have reviewed UBTE

professional identity, there remain under-explored aspects. Izadinia (2014) focused on the challenges UBTEs faced, factors affecting professional identity formation, and suggestions for induction programmes. Izadinia's (2014) review drew on Turner et al. (1987)'s definition of identity, therefore considering teacher educators as a social category and their professional identity as a general construct with little attention to the components of professional identity than the present review. More recently, Kaasila et al. (2023) reviewed 30 studies about teacher educators' teacher identities, overlooking other parts (e.g., discipline-related identity). Swennen et al. (2010) identified four sub-identities (i.e., schoolteachers, teachers-of-teachers, teachers in higher education, and researchers) and proposed implications for UBTEs' professional development. However, they analysed only 25 articles published before 2010. A thorough systematic review of current research into the nature of UBTE professional identity is needed.

Systematic review of the literature for this study showed that studies about the professional identity of teacher educators became more prevalent in the early 21st century, and specifically, studies that met the inclusion criteria for this review seemed to be published after 2005. One possible reason is that research on UBTEs' work as professional activity has increased in the last twenty or so years (Hangul et al., 2022) when teacher education has shifted into universities from colleges in many jurisdictions, and teacher educators in universities, as a new phenomenon, have become a field of study in their own right (Davey, 2013; Robinson & McMillan, 2006). From an initial focus on defining what teachers educators in universities know and do, interest has shifted to who they are and how they see

their work as university-based educators (Murray & Male, 2005) since 2005. For these reasons, the literature review samples studies from 2005 onward.

Overall, this review systematically analyses the literature on UBTE professional identity in the last 15 years, using the idea of the typologies of identities, or sub-identities, to explore the multi-faceted nature of UBTE professional identity. It also considers how these (sub)identities are shaped by supports and constraints. The aim of the review is to reveal the complex nature and challenges of being a UBTE, and provide evidence for higher education institutions (HEIs) to improve UBTE professional development. The following research questions guided the review:

1. What identities are described in UBTE professional identity research from 2005 to June 2021?
2. What factors are identified as supporting or constraining UBTEs' identities in this research?

3.1.2 Method

3.1.2.1 Search Strategy and Study Selection

A systematic review of literature was first conducted in two major education databases at the identification phase: ERIC and Web of Science (WoS), using identical search terms: “teacher educator” OR “university-based teacher educator” OR “teacher educator in higher education” AND (identi* OR role*). Factors influencing identity development were not included as specific search terms since these were usually explicitly and implicitly described in the selected articles. The listed search terms yielded excellent coverage of the

relevant literature. Due to the diversity and breadth of articles, Google Scholar was also searched using the same search terms in the title section to capture relevant citations. Figure 3.1 summarises the articles considered for inclusion at each step; 1603 citations were initially identified across all databases.

Where possible, filters were set to include peer-reviewed journal articles published in English. Duplications were also removed. Following these steps, the three databases returned 885 records for a title and abstract screening following the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-analyses (PRISMA) guidelines (Moher et al., 2009). The titles and abstracts of these records were assessed based on the following inclusion and exclusion criteria (see Table 3.1). A total of 737 records were rejected.

Table 3.1

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria for the Study.

Inclusion criteria

1. Journal articles were about the professional role/identity of teacher educators/faculty/lecturers in teacher education.
2. Articles were full-text, peer-reviewed empirical studies published in English.

Exclusion criteria

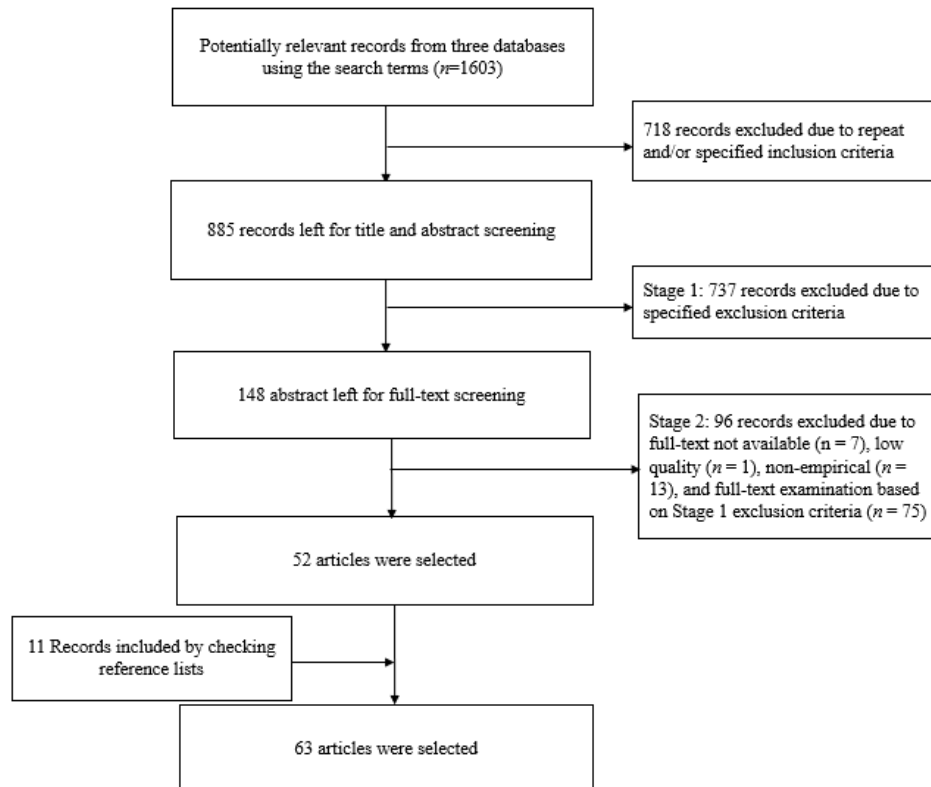
1. Articles about the professional identity/role of school-based teacher educators/mentors/cooperating teachers/community-based teacher educators/preservice teachers/academics do not teach preservice teachers;
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2. Articles about teacher educators' social identities (e.g., national-, racial-, ethnic-, sexual-, and cultural identity);
 3. Articles involved teacher educators working in in-service education, teaching fellows, non-formal UBTEs, and teacher educator candidates;
 4. Articles addressed the professional identity/role of UBTEs and mentors/school-based teacher educators/preservice teachers as one group.
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The remaining 148 records were downloaded for full-text screening, using the same eligibility criteria (see Table 3.1). Fifty-two articles remained for synthesis. Reference lists from selected articles and extant reviews (e.g., Izadinia, 2014; Swennen et al., 2010; van Lankveld et al., 2017) were checked to include essential works – 11 articles were added using snowballing. These were not identified in the screening process because their title or abstract did not include the search terms. Sixty-three articles remained for final review.

Figure 3.1

PRISMA Flowchart of the Literature Selection Procedure



3.1.2.2 Coding Procedure and Analysis Strategies

Inductive thematic analysis was used to explore trends from data and identify shared themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006) about the nature of UBTE professional identity and their supports and constraints. Data familiarisation was first conducted by re-reading full texts of selected articles, extracting critical information about study characteristics (e.g., contexts, sample size, methodology), and reviewing the content to address the research questions about UBTEs’ identities and their influential factors (see Appendix A). Phrases such as “Teacher educators are...”, “I consider myself as...”, and “I am...” were used to identify UBTE identities that emerged from the literature. Phrases such as “support identity as...” and “encounter difficulties in developing an identity as...” were used to capture relevant influences. Furthermore, supports or constraints were identified based on UBTEs’ responses about the impact of the influences on their specific identity, reported in the articles. Because

most studies were qualitative with few informants, information about supports and constraints is illustrative, not causal. The extracted phrases were further used to develop descriptive codes. Eighteen preliminary descriptive themes were then identified and merged by iteratively comparing the similarities and differences among codes. The content of the 63 studies was then coded to each theme. Articles were assigned to as many themes as needed to describe their content. In this process, similar themes were again grouped to synthesise new themes. For example, themes related to teacher-related identity (e.g., teacher-of-teachers, schoolteacher) were combined to form a “teacher” theme. Those concerning contextual factors that affected UBTEs’ identities (e.g., organisational support, reform or policy) were coalesced to constitute “institutional and social-related factors” (see Figure 3.2). Based on interactive synthesis guided by the research questions, one theme about the “nature of studies” stood alone. Five themes unpacking the nature of UBTE professional identity, ranging from overall UBTE identity to learner identity, were finally combined as “UBTEs’ identities emerging from the research”. Nine themes exploring the influential factors forming UBTEs’ identities were also integrated into individual, interpersonal, and contextual factors. Hence, three higher-level analytical themes were named and interpreted: nature of the studies, UBTEs’ identities emerging from the research, and influential factors supporting or constraining UBTEs’ identities. These will be reported in the next section.

Figure 3.2

Data Analysis Example

Theme	Categories	Codes	Examples of coded text
Teacher-related identity	Teacher of teachers	Teacher of teachers, role model/model, moral and service role, practical expert	"Whereas the growth of an individual like Sally would be enhanced by these roles, she says '[teaching] is an aspect of my role that I'm not prepared to sacrifice'. It is likely that this is the feeling of all these participants since all but one were former classroom teachers and they see their main role as teacher of teachers." (Yamin-Ali, 2018, p. 78)
	Collaborator	Collaborator/teacher collaborator, broker, mentor, counsellor/coach, tutor, bridge, facilitator, supervisor, co-professional/partners/colleagues with mentor teachers	"He wanted to do research that 'has a practical effect', seeing himself primarily 'as a tutor and collaborator with teachers' (p. 23)...They're likely to be your core people for actually doing some [classroom-based] research' (S1). He described himself at that stage as a 'teacher collaborator' (p.27)" (Harrison & McKeon, 2010, pp. 25, 27)
	Schoolteacher	(Primary/secondary) schoolteacher, (English/language/music) teacher, classroom teacher, PK-12 practitioner, once-a-school teacher	"Of the interviewees, all but one of the second career supervisors emphatically positioned themselves as former PK-12 practitioners rather than teacher educators. Shannon declared: "I see my role as consummate: 'This is what it's like in the real world'...My job was to be the real-world exemplar..." (Capello, 2020, p. 28)
	Teacher in a higher education institution	Teachers/educators/scholars in higher education, administrator, member of an organisation, leader/leadership role, lecturer/assistant professor	"...I understand myself as a university teacher and lecturer, to be an academic. (Male, new university)" (Griffiths et al., 2014, p. 82)
Institutional and social-related factors	University expectations	University history/culture/expectations/requirements/orientations/policy/structures; research culture/expectations/agenda/pressure/evaluation; (probationary) contract, tenure, performance, promotion; role/work/position definitions, responsibilities, expectations, requirements	"For Christy, teaching is considered more important than research, which is linguistically disclosed by her choice of terms –"baseline" and "sacrifice." This position, however, conflicted with the institutional discourse where great emphasis has been placed on academics' research output. Although she tried to resist such a discourse and defend her identity as a "teacher," she was labelled as an "inactive researcher" from the institutional perspective." (Yuan, 2016, p. 392)
	Organisational support	(In)adequate time, training, induction, resources, support, mentoring guidance, professional development opportunities, teaching loads	"As a result, we started to reimagine our ideal selves as colearners with our students and colleagues. The support we received from the instructor community played a crucial role in catalyzing such transformation of our ideal selves." (Liao & Maddamsetti, 2019, p. 298)
	National or international reform or policy	Changing policy, performativity, accountability and compliance culture, quality assurance processes, standardise quality and demonstrate efficiency, practical turn, managerialism in universities, institutional amalgamation, publication environment/bias/challenges; information age, technology development, the technicisation of teaching and teacher education; religion and culture of respecting teachers, the culture of care and caring, social expectations	"There is another important continuity between the stories of Moss and Seamus, which casts some light on identities and contexts. Both are also significantly concerned with a trend they observe as at a dilution of theory in favour of practice...This is played out amidst the overwhelming push of policy at local and national levels to increase accountability on measured student performance, paralleling societal trends towards an increased focus on productivity." (O'Brien & Furlong, 2015, p. 387)

To establish trustworthiness and credibility, search terms and preliminary inclusion and exclusion criteria were agreed on with co-authors before the first author conducted an initial screening and identified articles. During the literature-selection phase, any questions about whether a specific article was relevant or met the inclusion criteria were discussed among the authors of the study. Specifically, each author read the selected articles independently, and assessed the article against the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Then, the

authors of the study discussed the decisions made by each author and the reasons for inclusion or exclusion at regular meetings. Consensus was generally achieved without the need for further discussion, but a small number of articles (N = 3) required further discussion. This discussion resulted in unanimous agreement on including or excluding the article, as well as some refinement of the initial inclusion and exclusion criteria (see Table 1) to capture the target articles for inclusion in the qualitative synthesis. Next, the first author coded the key information from the articles included to answer research questions. Coding results were then shared and discussed at regular meetings with co-authors, and any uncertainties on iterative coding and synthesis (e.g., similarities and differences between codes) were discussed to reach a consensus during the analysis and synthesis phase.

3.1.3 Results

The first section of the results presents an overall description of the nature of the research, indicating the trends and approaches to understanding UBTE identity present in the literature between 2005 and June 2021. The second section describes the UBTEs' identities revealed in the studies and then the enabling and constraining factors that influenced UBTEs' identities.

3.1.3.1 Nature of the Studies

The 63 studies were conducted in many jurisdictions. Most were conducted in Europe (43%), followed by North America (35%), Australia and New Zealand (17%), and Asia (10%). The most common data-collection method was interview, self-study, and case study (see Table 3.2). Most were self-reported and small-scale qualitative studies.

Table 3.2*Studies Characteristics*

Study characteristics	Number of publications
<i>The region where the study was conducted</i>	
North America	22
Europe	(27)
UK	14
Other than UK	13
Australia, New Zealand	11
Asia	6
South Africa	2
Others	3
<i>Data collection methods</i>	
Interview	21
Self-study	19
Case study	17
Narrative inquiry	6
Life history	4
Journal/diary	4
Document analysis	3
Observation	3

Ethnography	3
Mixed method (survey, etc.)	5
Others	5

Note. The number of included studies is more than 63 because some were conducted in cross-national contexts and/or used multiple data-collection methods.

3.1.3.2 UBTEs' Identities Emerging from the Research

This section begins by discussing findings about UBTE professional identity as a phenomenon. Then it presents four sub-identities that emerged in the reviewed studies. Some sub-identities occurred more frequently than others.

3.1.3.2.1 Overall UBTE Identity

Nineteen studies explored the identity-formation process and tensions as a UBTE from a holistic perspective instead of looking for components of professional identity (e.g., Hayler & Williams, 2018; Liao & Maddamsetti, 2019; Trent, 2013; Vloet & Van Swet, 2010; Williams & Berry, 2016).

Identity transformation is an important research focus in these studies. Numerous studies have investigated the transition from schoolteacher to UBTE, particularly in the UK, Australia, and European countries (e.g., Netherlands), where UBTEs were often experienced schoolteachers with K-12 teaching experience (e.g., Diamond et al., 2021; Murray & Male, 2005; Swennen et al., 2008; Williams & Ritter, 2010). Dinkelman et al. (2006a), describing the transition of two novice American UBTEs, reported that secondary schoolteaching experience provided a solid foundation for their UBTE identity by giving them confidence

and credibility in the eyes of preservice teachers and cooperating teachers. Previous teaching practice, knowledge, and achievements are also emphasised by Murray et al. (2011) and Williams (2014) as the root of UBTEs' current work and identity in the university context.

However, the journey from schoolteacher to UBTE has been described as “a rocky road” (Wood & Borg, 2010) or “the roller coaster ride” (Kastner et al., 2019), indicating that being a former teacher does not automatically establish a UBTE identity; it may take 2-3 years for novice UBTEs to develop a UBTE identity (Amott, 2018; Murray & Male, 2005). The difficulties include developing new pedagogy at a second-order level, learning to be research-active, establishing professional relationships with colleagues and preservice teachers, adapting to the university context, absent professional development resources and opportunities, and experiencing conflicting role expectations from personal and institutional perspectives (e.g., Dinkelman et al., 2006a; Murray & Male, 2005; Yamin-Ali, 2018). Despite these challenges, most participants successfully transitioned from their previous teacher identity to current UBTE identity, meaning they viewed themselves as teacher educators rather than teachers. A few studies found inconsistent results with participants who did not establish a UBTE identity, constrained by ambiguous expectations, inadequate organisational assistance, and institutional discourses and practices, such as managerialism or quality assurance systems (e.g., Capello, 2020; Diamond et al., 2021; Springbett, 2018).

Compared to most studies concerning UBTEs who transitioned from schoolteaching, there were fewer studies on UBTEs holding doctoral degrees but with no K-12 teaching experience. Two self-studies in the USA, have investigated these non-traditional UBTEs and

described a complex process of forming a UBTE identity (Richards & Ressler, 2017) through resisting, self-investigating, self-doubt, imitating, participating, and seeking a sense of belonging (Newberry, 2014).

The remainder of the studies focused on components of UBTE professional identity, rather than UBTE identity as a holistic phenomenon. These studies are summarised below under the four identities identified by the review process.

3.1.3.2.2 Researcher

There is no consensus on whether researcher identity should be considered part of UBTE professional identity, across jurisdictions, institutions, and individuals. However, it is mentioned in 42 of the 63 studies (e.g., Davey et al., 2011; Harrison & Mckee, 2010; MacDonald et al., 2014; Yamin-Ali, 2018; Yuan, 2016, 2017, 2019). UBTEs engage in research and actively construct researcher identity to inform pedagogy, establish themselves in a specific area, and benefit preservice teachers and school communities (Hökkä et al., 2012; Lunenberg & Hamilton, 2008; Murray & Male, 2005). However, in some countries (e.g., the UK) where the North American tenure system is not extensively used, UBTEs often struggle with researcher identity due to external pressure and expectations (Menter, 2011; Murray et al., 2011) to be knowledge consumers and producers with numerous publications, citations, and high-impact factors (Tryggvason, 2012), particularly in research-intensive universities.

Establishing researcher identity has been seen as a challenging process that requires a dual transition – from school to HEIs, and then from schoolteacher to researcher (Dinkelman

et al., 2006b). Encountering increasing research expectations, participants from school backgrounds rarely construct themselves as confident researchers (Griffiths et al., 2010; Murray et al., 2011) but “struggling researchers” and “inactive researchers” (Yuan, 2016, 2017). UBTEs encounter difficulties becoming researchers with insufficient time, the most frequent challenge (e.g., Griffiths et al., 2010; Hökkä et al., 2012; Yamin-Ali, 2018). UBTEs described being “crammed” with intensive teaching loads and prioritising their commitment to preservice teachers, leading to inadequate time for reading and research (Griffiths et al., 2010, 2014; Murray et al., 2011; Murray & Male, 2005). Female UBTEs also struggled to reconcile research with family responsibilities (e.g., Griffiths et al., 2014). Consequently, an identity conflict between personal expectations of being a good teacher or mother and organisational demands of being a productive researcher has been reported (Hökkä et al., 2012; Tryggvason, 2012; Yamin-Ali, 2018).

Conflicts between high-stakes research assessment and inadequate research experience (McAnulty & Cuenca, 2014), and between stringent research demands and limited institutional resources and support were also reported (Hökkä et al., 2012; Yuan, 2016, 2017). In the UK, as in Pakistan and Australia, long-term experience as schoolteachers resulted in UBTEs lacking research ability and systematic academic training, and doubting their research proficiency (Khan, 2011; MacDonald et al., 2014; Murray & Male, 2005). Furthermore, inadequate institutional support regarding time, priorities, resources allocation, team collaboration, and induction programmes (Harrison & Mckeon, 2010; Yamin-Ali, 2018; Yuan, 2016) made UBTEs struggle to develop a researcher identity by self-support or allocate

teaching to research (Tryggvason, 2012).

3.1.3.2.3 Teacher

Teacher identity was identified as a theme, with four teacher-related identities in the studies: teacher-of-teachers, collaborator, schoolteacher, and teacher in a higher education institution. These identities were about being a teacher, with different foci on specific fields, student levels, or settings.

(1) Teacher-of-Teachers

A teacher-of-teachers identity was described as a central facet of UBTE professional identity in 31 articles. This identity draws on their experience as teachers, which supports their practice as UBTEs with pedagogical skills, relevant experience, and credibility (Murray et al., 2011; Smith, 2011; Snow & Martin, 2014).

Many studies concentrate on what it means to be a teacher-of-teachers (e.g., Amott, 2018; Lunenberg & Hamilton, 2008; McGregor et al., 2010). Murray and Male (2005), for example, distinguished between first- and second-order practitioners. First-order practitioners (schoolteachers) have long-term professional practice in schools and have implicit knowledge about teaching students. Second-order practitioners (teachers-of-teachers) have discipline and pedagogical knowledge to teach preservice teachers how to teach. This definition was widely shared in Western and Asian countries (Harrison & Mckeon, 2010; Khan, 2011; Yuan, 2019).

Since second-order teaching depends on the tacit knowledge and skills developed from first-order practice (Murray & Male, 2005), explicit modelling is a key pedagogy of teacher-of-teachers (e.g., Harrison & McKeon, 2010; Smith, 2011; Yuan, 2019). Moral and

ethical modelling were also mentioned, implying a culture of pastoral care in teacher education where UBTEs want to model relationships and connections with preservice teachers (e.g., Murray et al., 2011).

(2) Collaborator

Apart from a faculty-based identity as a teacher-of-teachers, 14 articles described UBTEs as collaborators in school-university partnerships (e.g., Grobgeld et al., 2016; Harrison & McKeon, 2010; Lloyd et al., 2021; Pereira et al., 2015; Reynolds et al., 2013). Tryggvason (2012), based on 15 Finnish subject UBTEs, suggested that participants considered themselves collaborators with practice, forming a bridge between theory and practice or a link between subject departments, education faculty, and practice schools. Willegems et al. (2016) explained that 10 Belgian UBTEs in K-12 education worked as brokers, manifested in co-researching, co-coaching, co-mentoring, and co-learning in school-university partnerships. Other studies reported similar findings regarding visiting the field, observing and evaluating preservice teachers' performance, mentoring, and cooperating with school-based teacher educators (e.g., Amott, 2018; Capello, 2020; Klecka et al., 2008; Menter, 2011).

Collaborating with the teaching profession benefited teacher educators and their preservice teachers (e.g., Khan, 2011; Snow & Martin, 2014). Three participants from Australia, the Netherlands and the UK identified themselves as co-professionals, partners, colleagues, or facilitators; working in a "third space" (Zeichner, 2010) between schools and universities provided them with a three-way dialogue among cooperating teachers, preservice

teachers, and UBTEs, and facilitated preservice and in-service teachers' professional development (Williams, 2014). Khan (2011), too, stressed the importance of being a collaborator in enhancing preservice teachers' teaching skills.

(3) Schoolteacher

Although some countries' (e.g., Israel, Portugal) teacher education programmes were research-oriented and recruited UBTEs with higher degrees and research records, nineteen studies described UBTEs with schoolteaching experience who retained their (previous) schoolteacher identity (e.g., Dinkelman et al., 2006a; Robinson & McMillan, 2006; Young & Erickson, 2011). Schoolteacher identity has been described as a double-edged sword, as UBTEs seek credibility by retaining their schoolteachers status, but tend to resist the workloads, organisational structures, and research challenges of universities (e.g., Boyd & Harris, 2010; Williams & Ritter, 2010).

Holding a schoolteacher identity can be a bridge between school and university settings (Dinkelman et al., 2006a; O'Brien & Furlong, 2015; Trent, 2013), and convince preservice teachers, school mentors, and colleagues of UBTEs' credibility, through authentic narratives, shared identity, and collective professional understandings (Boyd & Harris, 2010; Murray et al., 2011; Murray & Male, 2005).

However, schoolteacher identity may work against new challenges, responsibilities, and identities. Most UBTEs transitioning from school to higher education (HE) contexts experience slow and stressful resocialisation (Khan, 2011), since their previous experience and knowledge cannot be transferred directly. They must transition from expert to novice

again (e.g., Murray & Male, 2005; Robinson & McMillan, 2006; Williams & Ritter, 2010), give up former career achievements, and embrace new challenges in HEIs, such as educating adult learners and developing new pedagogy. Some may experience a misalignment between their *substantial* self as a teacher and *situational* self as a teacher educator (Kastner et al., 2019) and encounter high levels of vulnerability, self-doubt and anxiety, under the new and powerful discourses and practices in the HE context. Consequently, they only transition behaviourally instead of from within their inner selves (Griffiths et al., 2014), and still celebrate their schoolteacher identity (Dinkelman et al., 2006a, 2006b; Khan, 2011).

In jurisdictions where the schoolteacher career is common, much attention has been paid to the interplay between schoolteacher and UBTE identity, due to the two-way impact of schoolteacher identity, but no consistent evidence is available. Some studies have shown that schoolteacher identity disappeared and was overtaken by UBTE identity during the transition (e.g., Dinkelman et al., 2006a; Murray & Male, 2005; Williams & Ritter, 2010). In his interview-based study of the identity trajectory from language learners, language schoolteachers, to language teacher educators in Hong Kong, Trent (2013) confirmed that others' expectations and evaluation, personal agency, and future ideals supported participants' transition into UBTE identity. In other studies, a schoolteacher identity coexisted with the new identity, meaning that it became a part of UBTE identity by changing its weighting in different times and contexts (e.g., Murray et al., 2011; O'Brien & Furlong, 2015; Young & Erickson, 2011). Data from 18 UBTEs in Australia, the Netherlands, and the UK showed that there might be three coexisting situations: dominant schoolteacher identity, dominant UBTE

identity, and no difference between the two (Williams, 2014). Similar results were found by Amott (2018), who found that schoolteacher identity became a sub-identity; UBTEs perceived themselves as both teachers and teachers-of-teachers.

(4) Teacher in a Higher Education Institution

Sixteen studies found that UBTEs come to hold identities as teachers in HEIs, as distinct from teachers-of-teachers or schoolteachers (e.g., Chang et al., 2016; Klecka et al., 2008; Lloyd et al., 2021; Smith, 2011).

Through interviews with 12 English mid-career UBTEs, Griffiths et al. (2014) found that extended work in administration and undergraduate and masters-level teaching in education made participants re-conceive their identities and expertise as teachers in HEIs. Swennen et al. (2008) found similar results in the Dutch context. Likewise, Norwegian, Israeli, and North American contexts show that UBTEs took up administrator or leader roles in HEIs, reinforcing this identity (Grobgeld et al., 2016; Klecka et al., 2008; Smith, 2011; Snow & Martin, 2014). UBTEs from Ireland, the USA, and New Zealand were also attracted to administrative roles and identified as teachers in HEIs who facilitate programmes and organisation development (e.g., North et al., 2021).

Not all UBTEs accepted the identity as teachers in HEIs, owing to tensions between previous experience and current work and between institutional identity and competing identities (e.g., Clift, 2011; McAnulty & Cuenca, 2014). By interviewing 28 novice UBTEs in England, Murray and Male (2005) found that novice UBTEs, particularly those who had held senior positions in schools, had little knowledge of HEIs' operations and management

and felt deskilled, disempowered, and insecure in new contexts. Distances between school experience and HE settings made someone reject being a teacher in HEIs. In four studies, UBTEs tended to maintain an inner commitment to their familiar and friendly identity as a teacher educator or researcher, turning away from the new and uncomfortable identity as lecturers or leaders (Clift, 2011; McAnulty & Cuenca, 2014; North et al., 2021; Yuan, 2017).

3.1.3.2.4 Disciplinary Expert

Disciplinary expert identity has received comparatively less attention in the existing literature and emerges as a dimension of professional identity in eight articles (e.g., Amott, 2018; Kastner et al., 2019; Weinberg et al., 2021), with references to “musician”, “artist”, and “subject specialist”.

Disciplinary expert identity appears to be an outcome of subject interests. Long-term experience of teaching or doing research in specific subjects has nurtured UBTEs’ strong passion for the knowledge system, way of thinking, and methodology of their discipline. They establish credibility with students and colleagues through subject-expert identity (e.g., musician identity in Campbell et al., 2009; Kastner et al., 2019). Based on self-study, Leavy et al. (2018) drew similar conclusions: mathematics UBTEs were committed to mathematics, prioritising mathematics content while teaching preservice teachers. Evidence of discipline-based identity is also found among music (Pellegrino et al., 2018) and art (Meyer & Wood, 2019) UBTEs.

Different affiliations, with distinct rules, traditions, and culture, also affect UBTEs’ identity. For example, Finnish UBTEs who teach various subjects (e.g., maths, chemistry,

literacy) are located in subject-matter departments (Tryggvason, 2012) or have mixed affiliations to education and subject departments. Consequently, some UBTEs feel they do not belong in either place, but somewhere between subject department and education faculty (Tryggvason, 2012). As Kastner et al. (2019) suggested, being a musician was tricky since their institutions did not value music-making work; research and teaching restricted their time as a musician.

3.1.3.2.5 Learner

Although learning was identified as part of UBTEs' professional identity in only six studies, it was sufficiently mentioned to form a theme in its own right and reflects extrinsic demands and intrinsic needs in UBTEs' professional development and learning (e.g., Grobgeld et al., 2016; Willegems et al., 2016). The technological revolution has dramatically changed the modes and approaches to teaching and learning, forcing UBTEs to be learners to remain updated, grasp new technologies and embrace lifelong learning. As Yuan (2019) discussed, language teachers and teacher educators highlighted the need for UBTEs to be learners to meet demands of English language teaching in the information age and develop new practices and knowledge to cater to students' learning needs.

Additionally, the educational concept of establishing a community of learning encourages UBTEs to learn from preservice teachers or colleagues. A collaborative autoethnographic study explored the identity formation of two transnational UBTEs in the USA (Liao & Maddamsetti, 2019). Through participating in a community of practice and better understanding students' expectations, the participants' ideal image experienced a

change from a knowledgeable teacher educator, highlighted by their Confucian cultures, to a co-learner with students who can empower preservice teachers and facilitate their professional development.

Moreover, in the study of 14 European American teacher educators' portfolios, learner identity was found to reflect their engagement in development activities (e.g., conferences, learning new technology, and conducting research), which promote their professional development and benefit their teaching (Klecka et al., 2008). Two studies in Chinese and Belgian contexts show that participants pursued learner identity because of its advantages in connecting theory and practice, informing teaching and research, and gaining a sense of belonging as a part of academia (Willeghems et al., 2016; Yuan, 2017).

3.1.3.3 Influential Factors Supporting or Constraining UBTEs' Identities

The reviewed studies suggested several factors influencing UBTEs' identities, which could be grouped into three levels: individual, interpersonal, and contextual.

3.1.3.3.1 Individual-Related Factors

Four individual-level factors that support or obstruct the (trans)formation of UBTEs' identities were identified: personal biography, professional practice, affective or motivational factors, and professional agency. Personal biography was often described as either positive or negative, whereas the rest were experienced as strengthening factors.

(1) Personal Biography

Personal biography affects UBTEs' identities. Since most studies were conducted in European and North American contexts where UBTEs were typically experienced teachers

before entering HEIs, the impact of K-12 teaching experiences received much attention. Fifteen studies indicated that former school teaching facilitated UBTEs' identities development, particularly teacher-related identities (e.g., Amott, 2018; Campbell et al., 2009; Lloyd et al., 2021; Pellegrino et al., 2018; Pereira et al., 2015; Trent, 2013). Sufficient K-12 teaching experience gives UBTEs confidence, credibility, and authenticity during interactions with preservice teachers and school mentors (Dinkelman et al., 2006a; McKeon & Harrison, 2010; Yamin-Ali, 2018). Thus, UBTEs with schoolteaching experience are usually regarded as more capable than those without (O'Brien & Furlong, 2015; Robinson & McMillan, 2006).

However, K-12 teaching experience was reported as a constraining influence for UBTEs when developing new identities (e.g., university teacher, researcher) in six studies (Boyd & Harris, 2010; Diamond et al., 2021; Kastner et al., 2019; McAnulty & Cuenca, 2014; Newberry, 2014; Richards & Ressler, 2017). Although connections between previous work and current roles exerted a positive role initially, four studies conducted in the USA, the UK, and Australian contexts showed that increasing differences in roles caused UBTEs to negotiate, integrate, and struggle with previous identities; participants needed to move from supportive experts to a UBTE who challenged preservice teachers' learning (Dinkelman et al., 2006a; Murray & Male, 2005; Williams, 2014; Williams & Ritter, 2010). Two studies described practice-oriented experience as a barrier to UBTEs' research engagement and researcher identity (Boyd & Harris, 2010; Murray et al., 2011).

The impact of research experience was also highlighted in eight studies (e.g., Campbell et al., 2009; Clift, 2011; MacDonald et al., 2014; Shagrir, 2021). Some countries

that have academic pathways for becoming a UBTE (e.g., Israel, Shagrir, 2021) or experience universitisation reforms where teacher education programmes were integrated into HE contexts (e.g., the UK and Australia, Griffiths et al., 2010), usually emphasise UBTEs' research experience. Research experience (e.g., pursuing a doctorate) makes participants recognise the importance of research and publishing, improves their research competence and confidence, and is seen as stepping-stones for researcher identity (e.g., Griffiths et al., 2014; Yuan, 2017). Facing high-stakes research demands, inadequate research experience puts UBTEs in a precarious situation in HEIs. They must devote time and effort to learning how to research and often suffer from confusion, self-doubt and low self-efficacy, thus facing difficulties developing a researcher identity (e.g., Griffiths et al., 2010; Khan, 2011; Murray & Male, 2005).

(2) Professional Practice

Twenty-four studies highlighted that professional practice enhances UBTEs' identities. Teaching awards, positive feedback or recognition from preservice teachers or colleagues, a master's or PhD degree, first publication, rewards, and promotion, resulting from professional practice, motivate continuous professional engagement, and enhance UBTEs confidence as teachers-of-teachers or researchers with a sense of achievement (e.g., Griffiths et al., 2010, 2014; Harrison & McKeon, 2010; Kastner et al., 2019; Murray et al., 2011; Yuan, 2016, 2017).

Eleven studies show that more engagement in professional pedagogy contributes to the formation of teaching-related identities (e.g., teacher-of-teachers, collaborator),

particularly for novice UBTEs (e.g., Bullock & Ritter, 2011; Campbell et al., 2009; Clift, 2011; Dinkelman, 2006a, 2011; Harrison & Mckee, 2010; Liao & Maddamsetti, 2019; Lloyd et al., 2021; Yuan, 2016). Long-term teaching involvement develops UBTEs' professional pedagogy, emphasises their roles in affecting others' growth, and further enhances teaching-related identity (e.g., Newberry, 2014; Williams & Berry, 2016).

Although most UBTEs transitioned from schools, they were burdened with research requirements in HEIs. The role of research practice or reflection, especially individual or collaborative self-study, on identity formation was reported in 12 articles (e.g., Amott, 2018; Geursen et al., 2010; Griffiths et al., 2014; Hayler & Williams, 2018; Liao & Maddamsetti, 2019; Shagrir, 2021; Williams, 2019). As Dinkelman et al. (2006a) and Murray et al. (2011) showed, research engagement informed schoolteaching situations, linked theory and practice, and benefited UBTEs' professional understandings of who they are. Similar results were found by Williams and Ritter (2010) and Tryggvason (2012). They found that self-studies, a professional learning approach inquiring thoroughly into one's professional practices, challenged UBTEs' existing beliefs and practices, promoted professional relationships with peers and schoolteachers, and strengthened participants' understanding of what it means to be a teacher educator.

(3) Affective or Motivational Factors

Affective or motivational factors were reported to positively affect UBTEs' identities via professional beliefs, values, interests, love, commitment, motivation, and personal expectations (Campbell et al., 2009; Leavy et al., 2018; Yuan, 2017). Fifteen studies

demonstrated that commitment to teaching and students matters to UBTEs' identities (e.g., Bullock & Ritter, 2011; O'Brien & Furlong, 2015; Pellegrino et al., 2018; Robinson & McMillan, 2006; Springbett, 2018; Young & Erickson, 2011; Yuan, 2017): being keen on teaching acts as a calling for participants, reflects their strong desire to connect with students, encourages them to retain schoolteacher identities in current work, and view nurturing "good teachers" as part of the mission of being a UBTE (e.g., Griffiths et al., 2010; Murray et al., 2011). Even though time spent supporting students conflicts with high-stake research requirements, UBTEs still get a strong sense of fulfilment, which helps to balance teacher-related identity and an emerging researcher identity (e.g., Griffiths et al., 2014; Yuan, 2016). Similarly, a strong commitment to a subject (e.g., maths, music) makes subject UBTEs prioritise subject content and disciplinary expert identity (Leavy et al., 2018; Pellegrino et al., 2018).

Eight studies confirm that personal motivation, ideals, and expectations strengthen identity development (e.g., Dinkelman, 2011; Griffiths et al., 2014; Harrison & McKeon, 2010; Sharplin, 2011; Trent, 2013; Williams & Ritter, 2010; Yamin-Ali, 2018). As O'Brien and Furlong (2015) reported, the intention to search for personal development beyond the classroom encouraged participants, in Ireland, to take teacher education posts. These intentions influenced their practices in their current work, and their successful teaching practice further increased their sense of legitimacy and authenticity as UBTEs.

(4) Professional Agency

Professional agency refers to the capacity to influence the context to (re)negotiate

professional identities by utilising historical, cultural, and social resources (Lasky, 2005, as cited in Hökkä et al., 2012); it was reported as reinforcing UBTEs' identities in nine studies (e.g., Hökkä et al., 2012; Liao & Maddamsetti, 2019; Smith, 2011; Snow & Martin, 2014; Swennen et al., 2008; Trent, 2013). Professional agency assists in establishing UBTEs' identities amidst external demands and internal expectations. UBTEs exhibiting agency do not passively take on external pressure, but determine their professional practice, balance competing requirements, resist accountability and managerialism, and protect personal beliefs about good teacher educators (e.g., Dinkelman, 2011; Yuan, 2016, 2017).

3.1.3.3.2 Interpersonal-Related Factors

Two interpersonal-related factors supporting or constraining the development of UBTEs' identities were evident: working with others and interaction with preservice teachers. The former contributed to UBTEs' identities, whereas the latter was described as either a positive or negative predictor.

(1) Working with Others

Many studies describe collaboration with colleagues inside and outside institutions as a primary means of professional development, especially when institutions provide limited induction (e.g., Dinkelman, 2011; McKeon & Harrison, 2010; Williams & Ritter, 2010).

Twenty studies confirmed that collegial support positively affected UBTEs' identities (e.g., Chang et al., 2016; Harrison & Mckeon, 2010; Leavy et al., 2018; McGregor et al., 2010; McKeon & Harrison, 2010; Murray & Male, 2005; Weinberg et al., 2021). Through teaching and research projects, subject-matter groups, or a community of practice, cooperating with

peers widened UBTEs' networks, and offered opportunities to share, compare, and deepen professional understandings. Such factors contributed to a sense of acceptance and self-efficacy, and developed confidence and visibility as practitioners and researchers (e.g., Davey et al., 2011; Griffiths et al., 2010; Hökkä et al., 2012; Kastner et al., 2019; Williams & Berry, 2016). Studies conducted in the UK, Hong Kong, Australia, and USA contexts show that supportive relationships with mentors, supervisors or managers offered participants experiences and advice, developed insights and competence, and brought them legitimacy and empowerment. These relationships helped UBTEs progress from peripherality to participation in teaching and research and construct researcher or teacher educator identities (Griffiths et al., 2014; Liao & Maddamsetti, 2019; Williams & Ritter, 2010; Yuan, 2017).

However, acquiring collegial assistance is not easy. In contrast to supportive and collaborative school settings, universities with inadequate team cultures often offer little chance to communicate and share, making participants feel isolated and uncomfortable (e.g., Yamin-Ali, 2018; Yuan, 2016). It was challenging for novice UBTEs to build a sense of belonging as teachers-of-teachers without senior UBTEs' recognition and support; senior UBTEs often viewed novice UBTEs as incompetent and inexperienced and were reluctant to help (e.g., Khan, 2011; Newberry, 2014; Williams & Ritter, 2010).

Contact with schoolteachers is under-researched compared to studies concerning university counterparts. Seven studies considered how working with schoolteachers, especially in the partnership or "third space" (Zeichner, 2010), affected UBTEs' identities. Positive influences were commonly reported (Griffiths et al., 2014; Harrison & McKeon,

2010; McKeon & Harrison, 2010; Weinberg et al., 2021; Williams, 2014), indicating that UBTEs felt valued as teacher educators through professional relationships with cooperating teachers. Two studies, however, found that while working in schools, UBTEs in the USA and Australia met challenges or questions regarding their authority to provide support and suggestions, thus restraining their identity as teacher educators (Chang et al., 2016; Reynolds et al., 2013).

(2) Interaction with Preservice Teachers

Interaction with preservice teachers was described as both positively and negatively influencing UBTEs' identities. Eight articles suggested that contact with preservice teachers is essential in identifying as a teacher educator (e.g., Liao & Maddamsetti, 2019; Swennen et al., 2008; Williams & Ritter, 2010). Newberry (2014) and Young and Erickson (2011) asserted that "becoming" a teacher educator does not automatically result from "doing" teaching of preservice teachers, but is closely associated with students providing recognition and legitimacy. Caring for preservice teachers, meeting their learning needs, and facilitating their professional growth are UBTEs' key responsibilities, contributing to their identity as a teacher educator (e.g., Dinkelman, 2011; Murray et al., 2011). UBTEs, from both schoolteaching and academic pathways, reported that they felt like a teacher educator when receiving positive feedback from preservice teachers or witnessing their development, as it provided joy and satisfaction (e.g., Griffiths et al., 2014; Liao & Maddamsetti, 2019; Newberry, 2014).

However, three studies reported contact with preservice teachers constraining UBTEs'

identities (Swennen et al., 2008; Williams & Ritter, 2010; Newberry, 2014). Based on auto-ethnography, Newberry (2014) recalled how preservice teachers' rejection of her as a teacher educator, due to her limited K-12 teaching experience, resulted in self-doubt about her professional identity.

3.1.3.3 Institutional and Social-Related Factors

The contexts in which UBTEs work affect their identities (Dinkelman, 2011). Institutional and national traditions, norms, culture, supports, and demands in the studies reviewed (e.g., Dinkelman et al., 2006a) can be grouped into three main influences: university expectations, institutional support, and policy. Institutional factors negatively affected UBTEs' identities when individual expectations did not conform to organisational demands, and institutional assistance was unavailable. Adequate institutional support was found to influence UBTEs' identities positively. National or international policies and reforms were identified as either facilitating or inhibiting.

(1) University Expectations

Many studies have examined the role of university expectations and requirements on UBTEs' work and how UBTEs consider themselves (e.g., Boyd & Harris, 2010; Dinkelman, 2011; Kastner et al., 2019; Menter, 2011; O'Brien & Furlong, 2015). For instance, in UK higher education, research is not prioritised in "new" universities, while established universities require UBTEs to be research active, which leads to UBTEs' differing attitudes towards research and researcher identity (Murray & Male, 2005). Research pressures on UBTEs, however, are increasing with the need for HEIs to attract government resources and

develop reputations based on research performance (Yuan, 2017). Eighteen articles investigated how research expectations affect UBTEs' academic engagement and researcher identity (e.g., Grobgedl et al., 2016; Lunenberg & Hamilton, 2008; MacDonald et al., 2014; Murray et al., 2011; Tryggvason, 2012). Although few studies identified a positive relationship between research expectations and identity development (e.g., Young & Erickson, 2011), rigid and high-stakes academic demands usually negatively impacted UBTEs' identities (Dinkelman, 2011; Yuan, 2016, 2017). Organisational expectations of being research-active conflicted with personal values of being a good teacher educator, and threatened UBTEs' identity as a teacher educator (e.g., Farrell, 2011; Hökkä et al., 2012; Yuan, 2019), causing long-term anxiety, self-doubt, and identity crises (e.g., Kastner et al., 2019; Murray & Male, 2005).

University expectations of roles and responsibilities are also evident in thirteen studies (e.g., Griffiths et al., 2014; Grobgedl et al., 2016; Harrison & Mckeon, 2010; Klecka et al., 2008; O'Brien & Furlong, 2015). The clear conveyancing of role definitions and messages by organisations facilitated UBTEs' adaptation to their new roles and work (e.g., Clift, 2011; Lloyd et al., 2021; North et al., 2021; Snow & Martin, 2014). Ambiguous definitions confused UBTEs and negatively influenced their identity formation, because of conflicting teaching, research, and service requirements (e.g., Bullock & Ritter, 2011; Capello, 2020; Kastner et al., 2019; Smith, 2011; Yamin-Ali, 2018).

(2) Organisational Support

Tension between institutional demands and inadequate support is evident in the

studies. Participants in eleven studies claimed that insufficient organisational assistance regarding time, teaching loads, induction, and resources, were primary barriers to their identity formation and particularly their credibility as a researcher (e.g., Capello, 2020; Griffiths et al., 2010, 2014; Swennen et al., 2008).

Through interviews with eight Finnish UBTEs varying in gender, age, subject taught, academic status, and length of work, Hökkä et al. (2012) suggested that overload, lack of agency, and few resources were stumbling blocks for researcher identity. Similar situations were evident in other contexts, such as the UK and USA. Lack of time and growth opportunities restricted research engagement and prevented UBTEs from viewing themselves as eligible and active researchers (e.g., Dinkelman et al., 2006a; Murray et al., 2011; Tryggvason, 2012; Yamin-Ali, 2018). Some UBTEs utilise their agency and initiative and actively conduct informal learning (Dinkelman, 2011; Khan, 2011; Murray & Male, 2005; Williams, 2019), especially through self-study (e.g., Geursen et al., 2010; Liao & Maddamsetti, 2019; Williams & Ritter, 2010). Others report concern, anxiety, and difficulties; they may defend their former identity as a schoolteacher, as a source of credibility and authenticity, and resist external pressure to position themselves as a researcher or teacher-of-teachers (e.g., Boyd & Harris, 2010; Murray et al., 2011).

(3) National or International Reform and Policy

Thirteen studies discuss national and international reform and policy exerting either positive or negative influences on UBTEs' identities (e.g., Dinkelman, 2011; Hökkä et al., 2012; Murray et al., 2011; Springbett, 2018). A central theme is the influence of

neoliberalism and managerialism on HE. Many jurisdictions (e.g., England, Hong Kong) require teacher education courses to be practical and relevant under the accountability and compliance culture (Murray et al., 2011; Yuan, 2017). Consequently, local and national governments emphasise standardised quality and accountability for student performance, through quality assurance systems, teacher evaluation systems, and programme certification and accreditation. Although these measures may improve graduate quality and international competitiveness, participants criticised this regular scrutiny as time-consuming and trivial for teacher preparation. The additional pressure to prepare, collect, and report on performance data made them uncertain and disappointed about what it means to be a teacher educator (e.g., Griffiths et al., 2010; O'Brien & Furlong, 2015).

Moreover, research audit culture highlighting academic productivity inhibits the development of UBTEs' identities (Hökkä et al., 2012; Murray et al., 2011; Robinson & McMillan, 2006; Tryggvason, 2012), as the nature of teacher education work, teacher education research tends to be practice-based and concentrates on classroom teaching and learning, often by self-study (e.g., Chang et al., 2016; Lunenberg & Hamilton, 2008; Williams, 2014), practitioner inquiry, or narrative inquiry (e.g., Hayler & Williams, 2018; Trent, 2013). Such research receives low recognition in performance-evaluation systems and is often regarded as less valid and generalisable than other research, and with limited theoretical implications. A similar phenomenon in North American contexts showed that UBTEs faced a dilemma in writing a paper that could solve teaching issues innovatively but might not be published, and writing a paper that is safe to publish (Bullock & Ritter, 2011).

Consequently, these institutional and peer-review evaluation biases cause UBTEs to lack research capital, put them in disadvantaged and peripheral positions and weaken their enthusiasm for being researchers (e.g., Bullock & Ritter, 2011; Murray & Male, 2005; Yuan, 2016, 2017).

Five studies reported positive effects of national and international factors (Hökkä et al., 2012; Khan, 2011; Murray et al., 2011; O'Brien & Furlong, 2015; Yuan, 2019). For instance, a culture of respecting teachers in Pakistan (Khan, 2011), a caring culture in English and Irish teacher education (O'Brien & Furlong, 2015; Murray et al., 2011), social expectations about UBTEs and their work in Finland (Hökkä et al., 2012), and Hong Kong education reforms in the information age (Yuan, 2019) motivated participants in these studies to form specific identities, such as teacher educators, learners, or researchers.

3.1.4 Discussion

To reveal how UBTEs perceive themselves and what factors shape their identity perceptions, this study presented an overview of empirical studies that focuses on UBTEs' professional identity over the last 15 years. Identifying the components and influences of UBTEs' professional identity contributes to a better understanding of UBTE professional lives. In turn, this review aims to identify factors that are important for UBTE professional development and contribute to more effective teacher education programmes. The following sections discuss the key findings, the challenges of UBTE identity research, and implications for research and practice. It concludes with limitations and conclusions.

3.1.4.1 Findings and Implication

Analysis of 63 articles showed that many studies explored UBTE professional identity from a holistic perspective and simply used the term “teacher educator” without defining its meaning (Swennen et al., 2010). However, being a UBTE has been characterised as “multi-faceted” (Smith, 2011) and “Janus-like” (Ducharme, 1993). To provide a more nuanced understanding of UBTEs’ identities, this review identified four sub-identities of UBTE professional identity: research-, teacher-, expert- and learner-oriented identities. Forming UBTE professional identity or sub-identities seemed to be supported or constrained by individual, interpersonal, institutional and social factors. Whereas these findings could shed light on the complexity of the nature and process of being a UBTE, some challenges of UBTE identity research should be noted while interpreting the findings: the less-heard story of academic pathway UBTEs, unclear definitions, and less-researched aspects of UBTE identity.

Most research was conducted in North American, European, and Australian contexts where UBTEs transitioned from schools into HE settings (Davey, 2013). It confirms that English-speaking countries dominate teacher educator research, with “limited cultural perspective, particular education systems, and certain philosophical tradition” (Hangul et al., 2022, p. 54). In this light, UBTEs were found to be more likely to retain and celebrate schoolteacher identities, and struggle with research demands and establishing research confidence (e.g., Boyd & Harris, 2010; Williams & Ritter, 2010). However, those with higher degrees but little or no school-based teaching experience in non-western countries (e.g., Asia,

Israel) might have different stories and voices (Izadinia, 2014; Kaasila et al., 2023). There is a consensus that teacher education research should be embedded in specific contexts (White, 2019) with distinct histories, cultures, and norms, since it might influence the nature of teacher education work, such as the qualification of UBTEs, expectations of their roles, and the requirements of preservice teachers they prepare. Therefore, viewing UBTEs with different pathways as a homogenous group might be problematic (Kaasila et al., 2023). Exploring the identity perception of UBTEs following an academic pathway in other jurisdictions could be a future research direction for understanding teacher education practices and outcomes. Future research could examine the extent to which existing findings about practitioner pathway UBTEs could be applied to academic pathway UBTEs. Based on the consistent elements of UBTE professional identity across pathways and jurisdictions, international collaboration and dialogue in preparing effective UBTEs would be interesting. Moreover, academic-pathway UBTEs, with excellent research records, play an increasingly important role in discourses and practice, given the growing pressure on producing research in teacher education worldwide (Gunn et al., 2015; Menter, 2011; White et al., 2020). Some countries (e.g., The Netherlands), characterised as practice-based teacher education, have encouraged UBTEs to conduct research and complete a PhD degree (Swennen et al., 2010). Understanding how this changing agenda impacts the work and identity of UBTEs from different pathways could lead to ways to defuse existing tensions (e.g., teaching-research conflict) and promote their professional development.

Although multiple sub-identities emerge from the data, ambiguous or overlapping

definitions are a complicating feature since the literature does not always clearly explain the boundaries among these identities. This could potentially explain why UBTE is described as a poorly understood profession (Murray & Male, 2005). A central aspect of the unclear definitions is the relationship between teachers-of-teachers and teacher educators, supported by Swennen et al. (2010), who found the former as a synonym for teacher educators in some studies but as a sub-identity in others. These contested relationships might negatively influence UBTEs' role clarity, i.e., a clear understanding of their role goals and how to achieve goals (Lejonberg & Christophersen, 2015) and in turn their retention. It also confuses researchers and practitioners and impedes the development of the UBTE identity field. To resolve unclear connections, further studies are needed to clarify the boundaries of UBTEs' multiple sub-identities and reveal how different identities relate to each other to enhance UBTE professional development.

Some aspects of UBTE professional identity are more thoroughly researched than others, with a central concern being the tension between teaching and research. However, this review suggests that other aspects of UBTE professional identity would be useful to investigate. Particularly, the role of subject matter expertise in UBTE professional identity and the potential of learner identities could be explored more extensively. Only eight studies explicitly examined the professional identity of subject UBTEs as a single group. The limited attention on this aspect might reflect the difficulties in understanding the professional lives of subject UBTEs, who are usually situated in complex affiliations (either education/subject departments or in between, Tryggvason 2012) and teach disciplinary logic, knowledge and

methodology (Meyer & Wood, 2019). As subject UBTEs are central to the quality of the subject education system (Tryggvason 2012), focusing on how subject UBTEs perceive their work and themselves could be enlightening. It is important to explore how subject matters in subject UBTEs' work and identity, how their disciplinary expert identity interplay with other identities (e.g., researcher), and what factors facilitate or constrain their identity development. Furthermore, only six studies identified learner identity. While this identity did not emerge from requirements for specific roles (e.g., teaching, research, administration), UBTEs, as professionals, have a commitment to lifelong learning and constant professional development (Yuan, 2017). Day (2004) argued that teacher educators in the 21st century should not just focus on their narrow ranges of roles in teacher preparation and research, but be responsive to technological, social and economic change (e.g., knowledge society, life-long education). These change agendas challenge UBTEs to constantly learn to manage changes and moral purposes, and to nurture teachers to keep pace with the times. Future studies could explore the influences of UBTEs' professional learning and development, and how it relates to developing a learner identity.

This is a central tension about the teaching-research nexus for teacher education in HEIs, which might restrain UBTEs' professional development (Kastner et al., 2019). We agree with Smith and Flores (2019) that UBTEs, either from school or academic background, confront the competing demands, in most settings, of being committed to teacher preparation and being research active. A useful strategy to alleviate this tension is to merge teaching and research roles and identities into each other (Smith & Flores, 2019), and thus counteract the

theory-practice divide, provide research-informed teacher preparation, and in turn, influence the quality of future teachers (Berg et al., 2016). Therefore, being a UBTE competent in both teaching and research appears to be the key quality for future teacher educators (White et al., 2020). Although it is the challenge faced by all educators in HEIs, it is more difficult for UBTEs because they are teaching about teaching, so their teaching needs to be exemplary, and the field of teacher education research is often critiqued for its lack of substance, meaning that research in teacher education also needs to be exemplary. Becoming competent in both spheres has particular challenges (Yamin-Ali, 2018; Newberry, 2014). Possible approaches to support UBTEs to integrate both identities, as identified in this review, could be external support and self-support, as identified in Izadinia's (2014) review. Because of the important role of external support from institutions (Boyd & Harris, 2010; Kastner et al., 2019), this review suggests that the characteristics of teacher education work and the connection between teaching and research could be included in institutional policies when reviewing UBTEs' performance. Meanwhile, effective inductive and professional development programmes could be offered. For instance: practice-oriented UBTEs could be supported with research resources (e.g., journals, conferences, workshops) to update their curriculum and pedagogical knowledge and research competencies (Hökkä et al., 2012); research-oriented UBTEs could be provided with opportunities to connect with schools and schoolteachers and engage in university-school partnerships (Yuan, 2020). External support from others (e.g., supportive team, partnership) was also found to facilitate UBTEs' identities (e.g., McGregor et al., 2010; Weinberg et al., 2021). However, we acknowledge that

interpersonal factors received much less attention than contextual factors and need more future research. Personal support, including professional practice, affective and motivational factors, and professional agency, were described as enhancing UBTEs' identities (Bullock & Ritter, 2011; Liao & Maddamsetti, 2019). UBTEs are suggested to conduct individual or collective self-study, trial-and-error techniques, and reflection on the research-teaching nexus to achieve a balanced identity.

3.1.4.2 Limitations

While the review covers 63 studies published in English, and helps to further our understanding of the scope of UBTE professional identity and influential factors, these findings may not represent the views and identity formation of UBTEs in different jurisdictions; particularly given the influence of contextual factors identified in the reviewed studies. For instance, findings should be generalised with caution outside the inclusion criteria (i.e., UBTEs), such as school-based, community-based teacher educators, teaching fellows, or teacher educator candidates. Furthermore, different aspects of UBTE professional identity may be described and experienced differently in different contexts, so caution should be exercised when aggregating findings. For example, translating some ideas of subject specialism to UBTEs who engage in early childhood teacher education may not be applicable. Because UBTE professional identity is still an emerging field without established search terms and methods, relevant work may have been overlooked for this review. PRISMA guidelines and checking with co-authors were conducted to ensure the trustworthiness of the identified themes, but any analysis of this sort includes a degree of subjectivity.

3.1.4.3 Conclusions

Based on 63 studies published over the last 15 years, this review has identified several sub-identity categories: research-, teacher-, expert- and learner-oriented identities. Factors that positively or negatively affected UBTEs' identity (trans)formation in the studies occurred at the individual, interpersonal, institutional and social levels. The findings point to gaps in the research around academic-pathway UBTE identity and looking beyond a holistic UBTE identity to see what it might comprise. They suggest that more work could be done on understanding the enablers and constraints on UBTE's identity formation and show that a central tension for UBTEs occurs between research expectations and teaching imperatives. The review suggests that HEIs could pay more attention to the induction and development of UBTEs to increase their sense of themselves as valued professionals with a worthwhile place in the education system.

3.2 Research on University-Based Teacher Educator Identity in China

The above peer-reviewed manuscript (section 3.1) demonstrates that the research reviewed was conducted primarily in North American and European contexts. Teacher education, in any jurisdiction, is part of a wider education system, and these wider systems shape what UBTEs need to know and do. Although Chinese teacher education shares macro-discourses, such as managerialism, marketisation, and accountability, with other jurisdictions, it has some unique characteristics. As mentioned in Chapter 1, Chinese teacher education is undertaken in a university-based multi-institutional system (Shi & Englert, 2008), which differs from school-based teacher education in England (Murray & Male, 2005). Chinese

UBTEs usually enter teacher education settings after advanced academic study, but with limited school-based teaching experience (Cao et al., 2018), in contrast to UBTEs who transition to higher education after working in schools (Davey, 2013) in England, Australia, or New Zealand (Boyd & Harris, 2010; Murray & Male, 2005; O'Brien & Furlong, 2015). Moreover, Chinese UBTEs are often compelled to take up dual roles in teaching and research (Cao et al., 2019; Gong et al., 2021). Because there are considerable international differences in the system, content, pedagogy, and structure of teacher education (Snoek & Žogla, 2009), how Chinese UBTEs perceive themselves and factors that contribute to their identity perception may differ from UBTEs in other jurisdictions. Exploring this is part of the present study.

To understand better UBTE professional identity in the Chinese context, this section reviews previous research on UBTE identity published in Chinese. Specifically, this section begins with a description of a systematic search, using equivalent search terms to the above systematic review, in the largest Chinese education research database. Next, the current stage of knowledge in UBTE identity research in China is summarised. The section concludes by describing the main research gaps in the literature in the Chinese context and future research directions.

3.2.1 Nature of Chinese Research on UBTE Identity

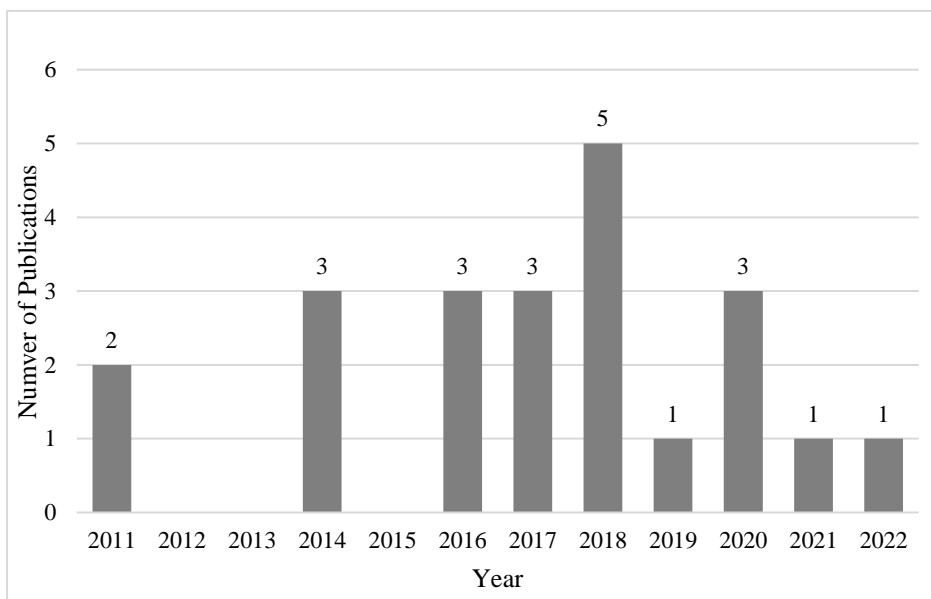
Although some studies of Chinese UBTE identity have been included in the above systematic review (e.g., Yuan, 2016, 2017, 2019), most literature about Chinese UBTE identity is written and published in Chinese. China National Knowledge Infrastructure

(CNKI, the largest Chinese education research database) was searched with equivalent Chinese terms (i.e., “教师教育者” OR “高校教师教育者” AND (“身份” OR “角色”)). The CNKI database was searched to add to the research published in English to ensure that any knowledge about Chinese UBTEs, published only in Chinese, was considered in this study, and to see if there were factors relating to Chinese UBTEs that did not appear in the English-language literature. As for the above systematic review, filters were set to include only peer-reviewed journal articles published in Chinese. A total of 77 records about UBTEs’ work, expertise, professional identity, and professional development were identified.

Only 22 articles were related explicitly to UBTE identity, comprising four review articles, 18 conceptual articles, and three empirical articles. Figure 3.3 shows how these studies have been distributed over the past ten years, indicating that UBTE identity research in China is emerging but still receives limited attention.

Figure 3.3

Number of Chinese Publications on UBTE Identity from 2011 to Aug 2022

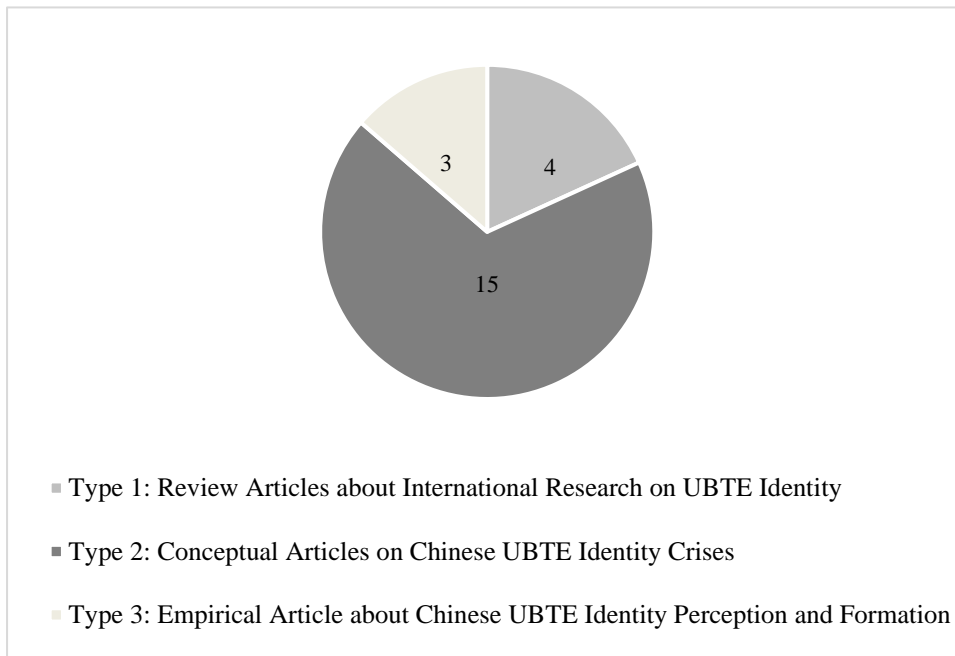


3.2.2 Research on UBTE Identity Research in China

As mentioned above, three types of articles about UBTE identity were found in the CNKI database. Figure 3.4 shows the proportions of the 22 total studies that were reviews, conceptual articles or empirical studies, indicating that research into UBTE identity in China is in its infancy. Most articles were conceptual pieces that presented international UBTE identity research or Chinese UBTE identity crises, rather than empirical studies that analysed the typology and formation of Chinese UBTE identity. This suggests that scholars are still conceptualising this field, rather than collecting and interpreting data. The following section discusses the review findings of each type.

Figure 3.4

Three Types of Research Articles on UBTE Identity from 2011 to Aug 2022



Four review articles in Chinese summarised the concepts or practices of international UBTE identity research, conducted mainly in the USA, the Netherlands, the UK, and

Australia, to provide a background and information for the Chinese system. Cui (2018) reviewed UBTE identity research published in Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI) journals from 2000 to 2017. Cui's (2018) purpose was to elicit the issue associated with being a researcher or teacher-of-teachers and their implications for identity construction. Cui (2018) described challenges, which included inadequate research expertise, heavy teaching workloads, difficulty adapting to a new institutional environment, and building professional relationships between colleagues and students. Providing an induction programme, building a learning community, and conducting reflective teaching practice and self-study were proposed to develop a professional identity. This systematic review, however, searched only one database (i.e., WoS); neglected research included in other major databases (e.g., ERIC) may cause selection bias. Broad search terms were also used, including "teacher educator", "cooperating teachers", "university supervisors", and "university professors", rather than restricting the search to UBTEs. It was therefore difficult to distinguish between school-based teacher educators and UBTEs in the findings. This review further called for a thorough systematic review specific to UBTE identity literature, which has been done as part of this thesis (see section 3.1). Furthermore, based on the work of Lunenberg et al. (2014), Yang and Ping (2016) reported that Dutch UBTEs had six professional roles: teacher-of-teachers, researcher, coach, curriculum developer, gatekeeper, and facilitator. Similarly, Hao and Kang (2020) suggested that, based on a comparison of the roles of UBTE that emerged from international and Chinese research on teacher educators, a Chinese UBTE should be a leader, teaching model, motivator/promoter, researcher, and cross-culture collaborator. While these

reviews made Western research more accessible to Chinese researchers, it is unclear whether overseas findings can be generalised to Chinese UBTEs. Moreover, the link between taking up relevant roles and internalising particular identities is still under-researched, and there is still a need for an empirical investigation into how Chinese UBTEs, who mainly follow academic pathways into their roles, perceive their professional identity.

Most of the articles found in the CNKI search were conceptual articles regarding Chinese UBTEs' identity crises and the underlying reasons. Most of these studies have pointed out that taking up several roles, such as teacher-of-teachers, researcher, coach, curriculum developer, gatekeeper, environment establisher, broker, and facilitator (Li & Li, 2016; Long & Chen, 2020; Zhao & Huang, 2018), caused Chinese UBTE to experience role conflict, role ambiguity (Liu, 2020; Zhao & Huang, 2018), long-term identity construction work, and even legitimacy crises (Liao & Wang, 2021; Wang & Zhao, 2022; Yang, 2011). Informed by Gee's (2000) analytical lens of identity, Li (2017) described three problems and primary reasons for UBTE identity issues related to institutional, discourse, and affinity identity. Chinese UBTEs suffered from role ambiguity in institutional identity because there were no professional standards for teacher educators, diverse demands on their work in teaching, research, and service, and tensions between practice-oriented teaching scholarship and an academic-oriented performance system. UBTEs' marginal status in academia impacted the formation of discourse identity (Li, 2017). Teacher educators often experience difficulty establishing affinity-identity with colleagues and feelings of loneliness because of the demands of an education department and their discipline department (Li, 2017). Liu

(2020) also revealed that working as a UBTE was still under-researched, ill-defined, and neglected, and that Chinese UBTEs struggled with invisibility and identity crises. The invisibility resulted from a vague understanding of being a UBTE compared to their understanding of being a schoolteacher or a university teacher. An identity crisis manifested as self-doubt, anxiety, and a lack of a sense of meaning and value because Chinese UBTEs felt confused about who they are, where their team is, what they should do, and where they should go (Shi, 2009). Moreover, Yang (2011) stated that the academic habit of universities of “prioritising research over teaching”, “emphasis on disciplines over pedagogy”, and “emphasis on theory over practice” (p. 74) conflicted with the limited academic capital of Chinese UBTEs, leading to an identity dilemma. Chinese UBTEs had to balance inner motivation to be a good teacher with external expectations of being research active as well as being a versatile academic. While these conceptual articles have acknowledged the complexity of being a Chinese UBTE, and summarised potential reasons for this complexity internally and externally, they have provided little empirical evidence to draw solid conclusions.

Only three studies found on the CNKI database were empirical. Yang (2018) carried out a narrative study and described a transition from a researcher to a teacher educator in a school-university partnership. Three phases of identity formation were identified: trial phase, development phase, and mature phase, which were motivated and promoted by self-reflection, practice, and learning from and collaborating with schoolteachers. Zhao (2014), working with 15 Chinese subject-based UBTEs, found that subject identity, teaching identity,

and research identity were affected by both individual and contextual factors. Subject identity originated from personal interest in particular subjects and the ways institutions were organised (e.g., institutional structure and norms). The fifteen UBTEs ended up with mixed affiliations to both education and discipline areas, with some UBTEs reporting they did not belong in either place but rather somewhere between their subject department and the education faculty (Zhao, 2014). Ma and Hu (2018) followed Gee's (2000) identity construction theory and examined what it meant to be a Chinese UBTE by interviewing 12 UBTEs. They found that being a university teacher was UBTEs' fundamental institutional identity, first built and then internalised through institutional authorisation. Researcher and teacher-of-teachers identity, as discourse identities, were constructed by external pressure (e.g., assessment, norms) and personal agency or preferences. Whereas these three studies, with small samples, provide some insight into UBTE experience and identity formation, more empirical work is needed to understand the phenomenon of UBTE identity in China.

3.2.3 Conclusions

The analysis of the 22 articles outlined above suggests that Chinese UBTE identity research is still at an emerging stage. The idea of 'teacher educator' is viewed as an imported concept by most Chinese scholars and practitioners, and therefore UBTE identity has received limited attention (Gong et al., 2021). Three types of articles were found in the CNKI database: reviews of international research, conceptual pieces, and a small number of qualitative empirical studies. Although existing research has acknowledged the crucial role of establishing and developing UBTE identity, conceptual research was the most frequent. As

only a few small-scale qualitative studies have been reported, and no quantitative studies, more research is needed to investigate the applicability of international findings of UBTE identity to Chinese contexts and participants, and to examine how Chinese UBTEs perceive their identity and work.

3.3 Summary, Gaps, and Research Questions

This chapter began with a systematic review of 63 studies on UBTE identity over the last 15 years, followed by an overview of UBTE identity research in China over the last decade. From an international perspective, a myriad of sub-identities for UBTEs have been identified, such as research-, teacher-, expert- and learner-oriented identities, which are supported or constrained by individual, interpersonal, institutional and social factors. UBTE identity research in Chinese contexts, however, is limited, and only a few small studies, based on interviews, have investigated how Chinese UBTEs identify or construct professional identity.

This review has identified three primary gaps in this field (see Section 1.3.2). 1) There is scant research on academic-pathway UBTEs' identity perceptions. In China, however, most UBTEs follow an academic pathway and transition from doctoral study into teacher education, an approach about little is known. 2) There is a little empirical investigation of the multiple components of UBTE professional identity, or how they might interact in UBTE's lives and work. 3) Few large-scale quantitative surveys or mixed research methods have been conducted in this area (Dengerink et al., 2015). Therefore, this thesis adds to knowledge about UBTE identity by exploring the professional identity of Chinese UBTEs, through three

studies.

The overarching research question of this thesis is: *How do Chinese UBTEs, who mainly follow academic pathways into their roles, perceive their professional identity, and why do they have these identity perceptions?*. To address this research question, three studies with sub-questions were conducted, each with a distinctive aim and with increasing specificity. Study one considered: *How do Chinese UBTEs perceive their professional identity? And to what extent are these sub-identities similar and different in first-class normal universities and provincial normal universities?*

Study two explores how Chinese UBTEs value and reconcile different elements of their identity, by asking: *What elements of Chinese UBTEs' professional identity are most salient? What are the major influences that shape their salient sub-identities?, and: To what extent do these salient sub-identities and influences differ between university types?*

Study three, using a large-scale survey, integrates the elements (e.g., identity perceptions, salient sub-identity, and multiple factors) examined in the former two studies and investigates: *How institutional demand and support, social relationships, and self-efficacy influence Chinese UBTEs' salient sub-identities as a teacher-of-teachers and a researcher?*.

To sum up, combining semi-structured interviews and a large-scale survey on Chinese UBTEs' identity perceptions and relevant influential factors will ensure an original study that adds to the knowledge base of UBTE identity research and provides a practical reference for UBTE professional development.

Chapter 4 Methodology

This chapter provides an overview of the methodology used in this thesis. The research paradigm within which the thesis is situated is presented first, with an explanation of why pragmatism is the philosophical foundation informing the process and conduct of this research. The exploratory sequential mixed methods research design, which consists of three studies using semi-structured interviews and a large-scale cross-sectional survey, is described. While the rationale for selecting the specific research methods used for each study to address the research questions is briefly examined, more detailed descriptions of methods used in each of the three studies are presented in their respective chapters (Chapters 5-7). Finally, section 4.3 describes the ethical considerations for the thesis as a whole.

4.1 Research Paradigm: Pragmatism

A research paradigm refers to the set of beliefs, values, or assumptions that researchers bring to their research and that inform their inquiries (Guba & Lincoln, 2005). The research paradigm reflects the perspectives of researchers about the nature of reality (ontology), the relationship between researchers and knowledge (epistemology), the nature of the value that leads research (axiology), the research process and method (methodology), and research language (rhetoric) (Creswell & Clark, 2017). There has been an ongoing methodological debate for over a century largely focusing on the relative contributions of quantitative and qualitative approaches to research (Onwuegbuzie & Teddlie, 2003). Quantitative research emphasises objectivity and time- and context-free generalisations, typically under the guidance of positivism and postpositivism (S. E. Maxwell & Delaney,

2004), while qualitative research considers value-bound and multiple constructed realities (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004), influenced by constructivism (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). Advocates of postpositivism assume that there is a “true” reality, but acknowledge that this reality can only be known imperfectly, while constructivists believe that reality cannot be known as truth because it is constructed by individuals or collectives (Lincoln et al., 2018). To resolve the dichotomy between postpositivism and constructivism, pragmatism as an alternative paradigm is increasingly applied in social science fields (Creswell & Clark, 2017), and is adopted as a research paradigm in this thesis.

Pragmatism bridges postpositivist and constructivist paradigms (Morgan, 2007) philosophically and methodologically by taking a balanced and middle position (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Pragmatism values both objective and subjective knowledge, integrates the strengths of quantitative and qualitative approaches, and highlights problem-centred and outcome-oriented views in conducting research and selecting research methods (Creswell & Clark, 2017; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). As Hanson et al. (2005) indicated, “the best paradigm is determined by the researcher and the research problem – not by the method” (p. 226). This study is developed within the pragmatist paradigm, reflected in the main question that motivates this thesis – *How do Chinese UBTEs, who mainly follow academic pathways into their roles, perceive their professional identity, and why do they have these identity perceptions?* Utilising this pragmatic, inclusive, and pluralist position offers more workable approaches for researching Chinese UBTEs’ professional identity, solving practical problems, shaping the research questions, and promoting a deep understanding of the complex

phenomenon of UBTE professional identity from diverse perspectives (Creswell, 2014; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Morgan, 2007). This thesis is based on pragmatism, which underpins mixed methods research design. The research design of this thesis is described in the next section.

4.2 Research Design: Exploratory Sequential Mixed Methods

The rationale for conducting mixed methods research, which utilises both qualitative and quantitative approaches, is to reduce preconceived paradigm biases, incorporate the merits of both methods, and understand a phenomenon or answer research questions deeply and broadly (Creswell et al., 2011; Hanson et al., 2005). Two key questions must first be addressed before utilising mixed methods: 1) whether both methods are equal or one method is dominant, and 2) whether methods are conducted concurrently or sequentially (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Considering the exploratory nature of research questions and the complexity of UBTE professional identity, this study used an exploratory sequential mixed method design: semi-structured interviews were conducted first to explore what it means to be a Chinese UBTE, followed by a survey translating the qualitative findings into a culture-specific instrument and then generalising these findings into a large sample. These two methods are not simply piled up; the former informs the development of the latter, and the latter further expands the breadth of previous findings.

A qualitatively oriented study was conducted first, because it was suitable for the exploratory-focused research questions and the intricate nature of identity. As noted in the literature review in Chapter 3, previous research has predominantly focused on the

professional identity of UBTEs who transitioned from schoolteachers (i.e., practitioner pathway, Davey, 2013), than those who were from academic disciplines with limited schoolteaching experience (i.e., academic pathways, Davey, 2013). In addition, identity perception and development is a complex and imperceptible phenomenon that needs to be explored with care and depth (Vignoles et al., 2011). In study one, to explore the possible components of UBTE professional identity, semi-structured interviews were conducted with Chinese UBTEs who mainly followed academic pathways, guided by the research question: *How do Chinese UBTEs perceive their professional identity?* A follow-up question, asked: *To what extent are these sub-identities similar and different in first-class normal universities and provincial normal universities?* These questions sought to identify the contextual factors that influence Chinese UBTEs' identity perceptions. Inductive thematic analysis was conducted to identify shared patterns and themes from data, because there is little guiding literature on Chinese UBTE identity to support deductive analysis. The procedures for purposive sampling and collecting and analysing data are presented in Chapter 5.

The research questions and theoretical framework of study two were informed and developed from the findings of study one. In line with previous studies, study one revealed the multi-faceted characteristics of Chinese UBTE professional identity. However, there is less empirical evidence about how UBTEs value and reconcile different elements of their professional identity. To explore this, new research questions were developed in the second study to investigate salient aspects of UBTEs' professional identity, relationships between different sub-identities, and what factors influence sub-identity development and expression.

The research questions for study two were: *What elements of Chinese UBTEs' professional identity are most salient? What are the major influences that shape their salient sub-identities? To what extent do these salient sub-identities and influences differ between university types?* With these questions in mind, identity theory was selected as the theoretical framework to guide the research. Deductive and inductive thematic analyses were conducted to integrate the theoretical framework (Stryker, 2002), the data from semi-structured interview transcripts, and research questions. The deductive analysis provided initial analysis strategies guided by identity theory, and inductive analysis with an open mind was conducted to welcome unexpected findings. The theoretical framework, data collection and analysis for study two, are described in Chapter 6.

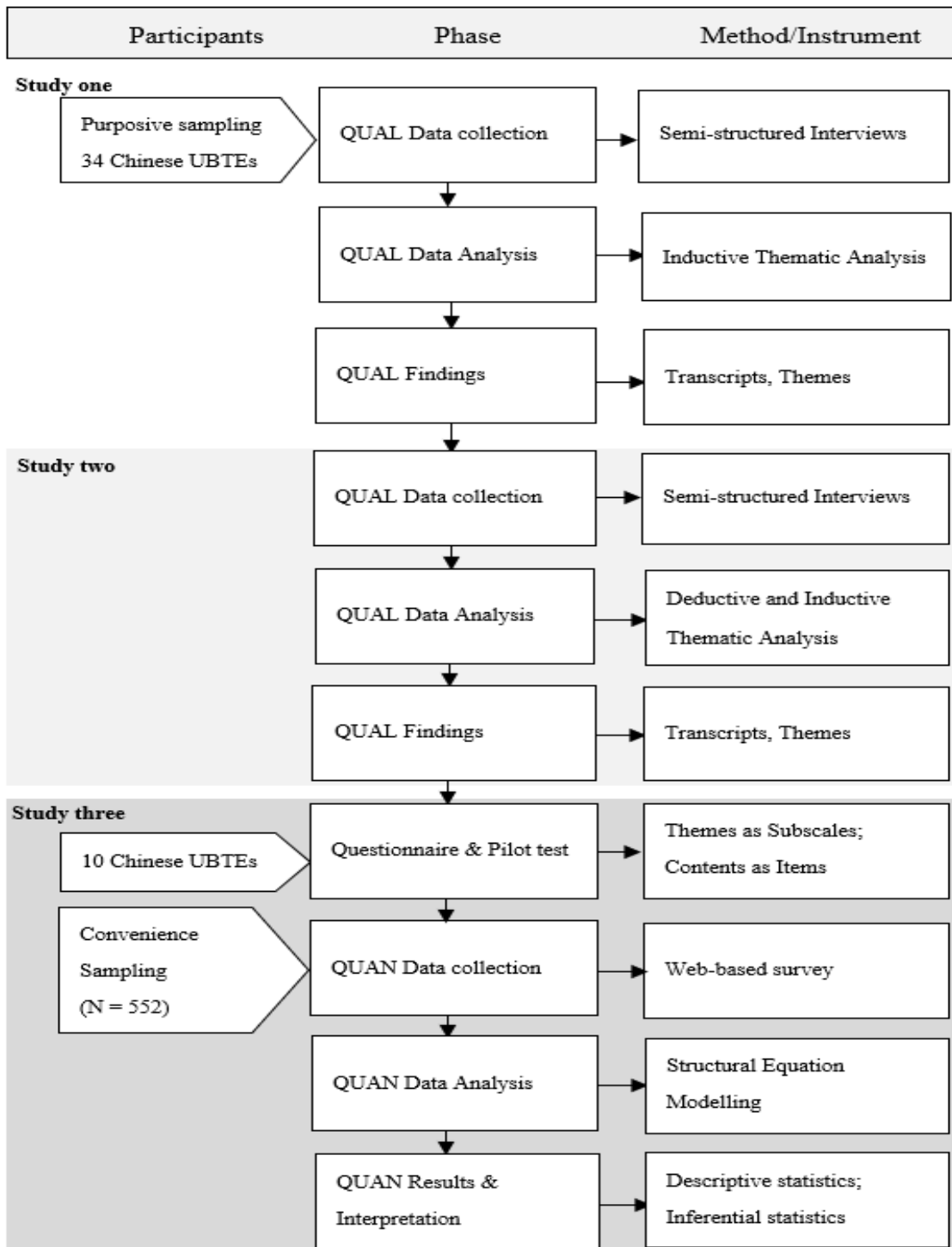
Following semi-structured interviews, a large cross-sectional self-reported survey was conducted to measure the variables of interest and generalise the findings to a wider population (Ghiara, 2020; Johnson et al., 2019). The survey in study three, informed by results of study one and two, examined the influences on Chinese UBTEs' salient sub-identities as a teacher-of-teachers and a researcher. The primary research question for study three was: *How do institutional demand and support, social relationships, and self-efficacy influence Chinese UBTEs' salient sub-identities as a teacher-of-teachers and a researcher?* The survey was developed by modifying instruments identified in the literature, most of which were designed for teachers rather than UBTEs. The findings of studies one and two were also used to inform the questionnaire design. Sampling strategies, translation of questions into Chinese, measurement tools, and data cleaning and analysis are described in

Chapter 7.

The combination of qualitative and quantitative methods in this thesis provides balanced evidence about Chinese UBTE professional identity. The qualitative data from the interviews enhance the depth of understanding of UBTE identity perception and formation. On the other hand, the quantitative data from the survey expands the breadth of the research and offers an opportunity to see whether the relationships and impacts reported by UBTEs in the qualitative study hold in a larger sample. Figure 4.1 shows the phases of this research, showing the participants, the instrument, data collection and analysis strategies in each study. The left-hand column presents the sampling strategies and the sample sizes of the participants. The other two columns detail the procedure in each phase, the methods for collection and analysis of the data, and the format in which the research findings of each study are presented.

Figure 4.1

Research Procedures Using the Exploratory Sequential Mixed Methods Design. Modified from Hwang (2014) and Creswell & Plano Clark (2017)



4.3 Ethical Considerations

Ethical approvals were granted by the University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee (Reference number: UAHPEC3473). The primary ethical considerations were informed consent, voluntary participation and withdrawal, confidentiality and

anonymity, and data storage and future use. Before entering each site virtually, the permissions of the deans of the faculties to collect data were acquired. Once approval was received, the administration office was contacted to assist in distributing the Participant Information Sheets (PIS) and Consent Forms (CF) to potential participants. UBTEs who were interested in this project were informed through a PIS of the aims and procedure of the research project, the rights to participate voluntarily and withdraw anytime without giving a reason, and the protection of their identity. Those completed the CFs for participating in the interview sections or clicked the consent button in the web-based questionnaire link. Data were kept confidential in interviews, and completion of the questionnaires was anonymous. No individuals or institutions are able to be identified, as each participant's identity was coded. The interview transcripts, survey questionnaires, and electronic consent forms are stored separately from each other and securely on university servers. After six years, all individual-level raw data and consent forms will be shredded or deleted. The de-identified results have been used for academic publications and conference presentations.

Chapter 5 Study One

The thesis thus far has developed a clear understanding of the current state of teacher educator identity research, highlighted the importance of exploring Chinese UBTEs' professional identity perceptions and development, and introduced the exploratory sequential mixed methods approach used in this thesis. This chapter and the following two chapters (Chapters 6-7) present three peer-reviewed empirical studies that address the aforementioned gaps (sections 1.3.2 and 3.3) in the research field of UBTE identity. This chapter, presenting the first empirical study, investigates the complex nature and multiple components of being a Chinese UBTE. As discussed in sections 1.3.2 and 3.3, previous studies have mainly explored the professional identity of those who have previously been schoolteachers; it has been noted that there is less research on UBTEs who have transitioned directly from academic study. Due to the prevalent research audit culture internationally and increasing pressure for research engagement and productivity by academics (including UBTEs) in higher education settings, academic-pathway UBTEs with research experience and records may become increasingly important in teacher education. Thus, it is timely to understand their perceptions of work and themselves.

Study one (Chapter 5, Liang, et al., 2023a) used semi-structured interviews to explore multiple components of being a Chinese UBTE and investigated the characteristics of Chinese UBTE identity perceptions to see if they differed by university type. The paper presented below compares identity perceptions across workplaces because different institutional orientations and missions between research-oriented first-class normal

universities and teaching-oriented provincial normal universities may affect UBTEs' work and identity. A key finding highlighted from this study is that UBTEs' professional identity was multi-faceted and included multiple sub-identities. A comparison between the two types of universities is highlighted under each identity. Finally, the findings of this study are discussed, by comparing what was found to the existing findings about practitioner pathway UBTEs.

Based on a deep understanding of identity theory, I gradually realised a concern when integrating the findings of study one into the overall thesis and carefully considering its coherence. Specifically, I had initially employed the terms "identities" and "sub-identities" interchangeably to describe multiple components of UBTEs' professional identity. While their mixed usage may not lead to significant confusion within an individual manuscript, it may result in different interpretations when considering the thesis context. In this context, "identities" might be perceived as referring to the overall professional identity, rather than referring to its components. As study one explores the components of UBTE professional identity, "sub-identities" would be a clearer choice. Readers are advised to remain aware of this matter while engaging with the below manuscript.

Who do They Think They are? Professional Identity of Chinese University-Based Teacher Educators

Abstract

University-based teacher educators (UBTEs) are critical to teacher education quality. Studies have mainly explored the professional identity of UBTEs who were previously schoolteachers, whereas less is known about those who followed academic pathways. This study examines how UBTEs perceive their identities in the Chinese context, where academic pathways are common. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 34 purposively sampled participants from two university types: first-class normal universities, and provincial normal universities. Five identities aligned with previous research: teacher in a higher education institution; researcher; teacher-of-teachers; collaborator; and coach. Three new identities emerged from the data: teacher of tradition; questioner; and doctoral student. Similarities and differences in identity perception were also discovered between university types. This study suggests the complexity of being a UBTE is shaped by institutional context, national and cultural milieu, and the nature of teacher education work, and concludes with recommendations for teacher education programmes.

Keywords: University-based teacher educator; academic pathway; professional identity; comparative perspective

5.1 Introduction

As a specialised occupational group in higher education, university-based teacher educators (UBTEs) contribute to shaping the teaching profession (Murray et al., 2011), and are believed to be “the core” of a high-quality teacher education programme (S. White et al., 2020). In this context, an increasing number of studies have explored UBTEs’ professional expertise (Berry, 2007), professional practice (Yamin-Ali, 2018), and professional development (Cochran-Smith et al., 2020). However, less is known about UBTEs’ professional identity.

Professional identity refers to UBTEs’ understanding and (re)interpretation of who they are and how others perceive them in their work (Beijaard et al., 2004; Vloet & Van Swet, 2010), arising from their knowledge base, interactions with others and their teacher education context (Day et al., 2006). Identity theories vary, drawing on psychological, sociological, and postmodern perspectives. In this study, professional identity is seen as more than a role description or a highly personal psychological phenomenon (Callero, 1985). Instead, it is defined as a set of internalised meanings attached to specific roles that people occupy in society (Stryker, 2002). UBTEs’ work is diverse, including teaching, research, service to their professional community, and contributing to higher education, which means that they negotiate diverse meanings, norms, and expectations attached to these different types of work (Stets & Serpe, 2013). UBTEs’ professional identity is, therefore, multi-faceted and can be regarded as comprising sub-identities related to different parts of their work, for example, “teacher-of-teachers”, “researcher”, and “teacher in higher education” (Smith & Flores, 2019;

Swennen et al., 2010). For individual UBTEs, some of these sub-identities are more relevant than others – Some sub-identities become dominant and come to be seen as the core of UBTEs’ professional identity, while others may become marginalised (Beijaard et al., 2004; Davey, 2013). Identity salience is a way of thinking about which sub-identity is more active or relevant to individuals in certain situations (Stryker, 2002). The professional identity of a UBTE is likely to comprise several sub-identities that will be more or less salient in different times or contexts, depending on who they are and what they are asked to do (Murphy & Pinnegar, 2011; Izadinia, 2014). The present study uses this conception of UBTE professional identity to examine a context in which many UBTEs enter teacher education from academic disciplines rather than from classroom practice, to understand what identities emerge in these circumstances and how that might impact teacher education’s form and quality.

Previous studies suggest that the professional identity of UBTEs is closely associated with their professional disposition (McAnulty & Cuenca, 2014), engagement (S. White et al., 2020; Yuan, 2019), and professional development needs (Swennen et al., 2010). Existing literature also highlights that simply taking up a professional role as a UBTE does not automatically translate to developing an identity as a teacher educator, suggesting that becoming a UBTE is not an easy and linear process but an iterative construction over time (Amott, 2018). Although some studies have considered the formation of professional identities among UBTEs, most focus on the practitioner pathway (Davey, 2013), where experienced schoolteachers transition to novice UBTEs (Boyd & Harris, 2010; Murray & Male, 2005; O’Brien & Furlong, 2015), particularly in the European, UK, Australia and New

Zealand contexts. To date, several common identities for practitioner-pathway UBTEs have been found: researchers, schoolteachers, teachers of teachers, and teachers in higher education (Swennen et al., 2010). Research on UBTEs with higher degrees but little or no school teaching experience, characterised as an academic pathway (Davey, 2013), has focused to date on the nature of their work and their professional development needs (e.g., Kelchtermans et al., 2018; Vanassche et al., 2015). Whether their academic pathway to teacher education makes a difference to their identity perceptions still needs more investigation (Newberry, 2014). Understanding how academic-pathway UBTEs perceive themselves could provide additional insights for their induction, professional development and learning, and retention, as well as help us think about their potential impact on preservice teachers.

The academic pathway to becoming a UBTE is used in most teacher education programmes in North America, China, Israel, and some European countries (e.g., Portugal) (Davey, 2013). In China, “universitisation” reform in teacher education since the 1990s has resulted in “transformation and upgrade” through an amalgamation of numerous teacher education institutions into the university sector (Shi & Englert 2008, 351). Chinese UBTEs usually hold higher degrees (e.g., PhD) but have limited or no K-12 teaching experience. They are required to engage in teaching and research concurrently, and they have been prepared for research. This contrasts with UBTEs who were previously schoolteachers, and therefore had teaching experience but often with minimal research preparation before entering higher education. Existing findings about the professional identity of practitioner

pathways UBTEs may not be generalisable in contexts where the academic pathway is common.

In addition to the impact of jurisdictions, different workplaces and organisational positioning in the same jurisdiction may also make a difference to UBTEs' identities. For instance, provincial normal universities and first-class normal universities offer teacher education programmes in China. All universities with "normal" in their names primarily offer teacher education. However, provincial normal universities are usually teaching-oriented, supervised by the provincial Department of Education, and are regarded as offering good teacher education for their provinces. These universities deliver professional and vocational courses mainly at the undergraduate level, and prepare qualified teachers for the local labour market. To resolve teacher shortage issues in specific areas, provincial normal universities offer apprenticeship-style school based models, so teaching and practicum supervision is a large part of UBTEs' work in these universities. In contrast, first-class normal universities are research-intensive and are affiliated with the Ministry of Education in China. They usually rank at the top of national and international university league tables, and are regarded as offering nationally and internationally recognised programmes, which function as a model for other teacher education institutions (Cao et al., 2019). UBTEs in first-class normal universities have higher research demands, not only because research productivity is the basis of their salary, probationary contracts, promotion, and institutional reputation, but also because their institutions set a higher-level goal of preparing excellent teachers who are also researchers. Due to the distinct cultures, expectations, priorities, and values between these

two types of universities, UBTEs in each place face different imperatives – more teaching in provincial normal universities and more research in first-class normal universities. This may shape their professional identity. However, little is known about the effect of different workplaces on UBTEs’ identities, and no agreement has yet been reached (Griffiths et al., 2010; Murray et al., 2011). This study includes participants from both types of normal universities to explore whether the different contexts impact their reported identities.

Despite the different manifestations of teacher education in each jurisdiction and workplace, most countries and universities share similar macro-discourses, where neoliberalism, marketisation, and managerialism increasingly permeate and threaten teacher education and UBTEs, via probationary contracts, tenure track processes, and performance systems (Yuan, 2019). These measures emphasise higher qualification standards for UBTEs and quantify research performance and productivity, which shifts UBTEs’ time allocation and engagement from teaching and students toward research (Cochran-Smith, 2005; Menter, 2011). More novice UBTEs with higher degrees and excellent academic outputs are increasingly recruited for teacher education programmes (Yuan, 2016) over expert practitioners. Consequently, UBTEs from an academic pathway may become increasingly important in teacher education, making it important to understand their professional identity.

This study investigates how Chinese UBTEs, who follow academic pathways into their roles, perceive their professional identity. Further, it examines whether these reported identities differ by university type. The overarching research questions for this study are: 1) how do Chinese UBTEs perceive their professional identity? and 2) To what extent are these

identities similar and different in first-class normal universities and provincial normal universities?

5.2 Method

5.2.1 Participants

To collect data illustrating the identity perceptions of Chinese UBTEs, 34 participants were recruited voluntarily from 11 universities in mainland China: six provincial normal universities and five first-class normal universities. Each university offers teacher education as its main programme, with a long history and culture of cultivating prospective teachers.

Purposive sampling was used to obtain a group of participants that varied in professional title, subject taught, length of service as a UBTE, and particularly the type of Higher Education Institution (HEI) they worked in. As shown in Table 5.1, this group is typical of UBTEs in China (Ping et al., 2021).

Participants were assigned pseudonyms to preserve confidentiality. The first letter of the pseudonym indicates the type of university the participant worked at: pseudonyms starting with T are participants who work in first-class normal universities, and pseudonyms starting with C are participants who work in provincial normal universities.

Table 5.1

Demographics of Participants

Participant Characteristics	Number of interviewees (n=34)
University type	First-class normal university (n=5): 17 Provincial normal university (n=6): 17
Gender	Female: 13 Male: 21
Educational qualification	Doctorate: 28

	Doctorate in process: 1
	Master's degree: 3
	Bachelors: 2
Job title	Lecture: 10
	Associate professor: 13
	Professor: 11
Length of service as a UBTE	1-5 years (novice): 12
	6-14 years (experienced): 11
	15+years (veteran): 11
K-12 teaching experience	Yes: 3
	No: 31

5.2.2 Data Collection and Analysis

In-depth and semi-structured interviews were conducted in Mandarin. The interview protocol centred on four themes: how participants became UBTEs, the differences between being a UBTE and being a schoolteacher or academic, their perceptions of what their work comprises, and the construction of their identities through work. Each interview lasted 30-90 minutes. This variation in timing depended on whether the participants felt they had shared all they could concerning the questions, and the schedules of the participants. The interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim in Chinese, and then translated into English. To establish trustworthiness, participants were asked to verify the accuracy of the transcripts before analysis. To confirm the reliability of English translation, a bilingual expert was employed to conduct a back-translation of a random sample of 20% of the translated material, and compare the quality and meaning equivalence to the original text. After minor wording changes, there was consensus between researchers and the translator that the translations were reliable.

Due to the exploratory nature of this study, thematic inductive analysis was applied to capture the trends and patterns from the data, identify shared meaning and themes (Braun &

Clarke, 2006), and deepen understanding of Chinese UBTEs' professional identity. Specifically, the first author familiarised herself with the data by reading transcripts and notes thoroughly, then labelled segments directly from raw data by inductive coding. This generated descriptive codes from meaningful segments. These codes related to specific examples of UBTE's understanding of their work (e.g., "teaching", "doing research", "practicum supervision") as well as the reasons for working in this way (e.g., "teaching demand", "research interests"). After that, cross-case analysis was conducted to iteratively compare the similarities and differences among descriptive codes and combine similar codes into broader categories about UBTE identity perceptions (e.g., "member of organisation", "role model", "knowledge transmitters", "broker") and relevant reasons (e.g., "working context", "role definition", "professional experience"). Finally, identifying and naming themes were proceeded by continually comparing the relationships between each category, and synthesising core categories into eight themes that capture the main identity categories of being a Chinese UBTE (e.g., "teacher of teacher", "researcher", "collaborator"). Guided by the research questions and purpose, specific descriptions were developed for each theme (i.e., a specific aspect of UBTE professional identity). Co-authors were involved in each phase to check and test codes, categories, and themes at regular meetings. All analysis was conducted with NVivo 12.

In thematic analysis, the frequency of a category appearing is not important. If something is said often by participants, that does not tell us that it has more significance in answering the research question. However, this study presents the frequencies with which the

themes occurred for two reasons: first, as an additional information source for the reader about the nature of these identity conceptions. As little is known about the multi-part nature of UBTE professional identity, this early exploration describes what UBTEs said and gives readers an idea of how prevalent that idea was in this data, to build a picture of how frequently UBTEs have multiple parts of their professional identity (J. A. Maxwell, 2010). Additionally, the frequencies help identify possible patterns based on context, making it easier to compare data from the provincial normal universities and first-class normal universities (Neale et al., 2014). The frequencies provided in the results section below are intended to add to the picture provided by the themes from participants' interviews, rather than to validate them.

5.3 Results: Identities of Chinese UBTEs

Overall, eight themes emerged from the thematic analysis, presenting several aspects of UBTE professional identity: teacher in a higher education institution; researcher; teacher-of-teachers; teacher of tradition; collaborator; coach; questioner; and doctoral student. Identities being discussed are fluid and interrelated. More than one might be present in a particular UBTE, together forming a picture of the key aspects of UBTE professional identity for UBTEs in this group. In this section, each theme (i.e., one aspect of UBTE professional identity) is described, with examples from interviews illustrating key points. Points of comparison between the two university types are highlighted.

5.3.1 Teacher in a Higher Education Institution

Nearly all participants viewed themselves as “university teachers”, because most

interviewees across both universities experienced a similar transition from doctoral students to university lecturers. Participants tended to identify their institutional identity as their fundamental identity; before seeing themselves as teacher educators in particular, they saw themselves as members of HEI where they worked.

Take Tian as an example. She recalled how she initially suffered from inner fear about external expectations and recounted slowly embracing a new identity:

I continually explored the status of becoming a university teacher in the first three years. At that time, I needed to constantly show up in front of students due to insecurity, or prove my existence and affiliation with this institution. I felt that as long as I stepped onto the podium, I could truly become a teacher... (Tian)

In terms of what it means to be a teacher in HEI, participants from both types of universities highlighted that this identity is related to diverse types of teaching with different student populations, such as undergraduate or master students in education. Although interviewees recognised the importance of teaching and established a “university teacher” identity, they were unclear about the different nature of teaching in teacher education programmes compared with teaching in schools or other subject areas. Chai describes her early confusion with her teacher education work:

I thought I was a university teacher at the beginning when someone asked what you are doing or where you work... I did not have precise positioning for my work. (Chai)

Another characteristic of being a teacher in HEI, common in both university types, is taking on management roles as an “academic citizen”, such as “counsellor”, “head-teacher”,

“manager”, “programme designer”, “coordinator”, and “dean”, who undertakes organisational assignments, conducts administrative work, and facilitates department development. Participants formed this identity while working on institutional policies (Chao) and designing and running programmes (Ti).

Overall, being a teacher in HEI as a part of professional identity seemed to be attached to being a teacher in a particular institution, rather than being a teacher educator. Chinese UBTEs in this study saw themselves as university-level teachers, reinforced by doing institutional administration work, teaching different groups of students with different aims and not really understanding what it meant to be a teacher educator in a university.

5.3.2 Researcher

Chinese UBTEs saw themselves as a “researcher” who conducts research to meet academic demands, solves frontline problems, and develops insights into teacher education. Participants believed that teacher educators should not just be instructors who transmit knowledge and skills but also study and reflect on teaching and learning. For instance, Cui explained how research made the difference between being UBTEs and being schoolteachers:

Theoretical thinking is the most significant difference between university teachers and schoolteachers. UBTEs should be good at reflection rather than simply accumulating experience. (Cui)

Participants saw the creation of new knowledge as part of the UBTE role, including the role of self-study and reflection in creating knowledge about teacher education. This aspect distinguished them from a schoolteacher or instructor who only consumes knowledge

and teaches existing knowledge, rather than producing new knowledge. A similar view was shared by Cai, who elaborated that research, for UBTEs, is one of the most critical duties and acts as a pathway from “instructor” to expert:

Teaching well is not enough to become a good teacher or an expert. The core difference between a teacher who only teaches textbook knowledge and an expert is doing research. If teachers always teach without any reflection, then they, without any doubt, will be mere “jiao shu jiang” (instructors). Reflection will gradually support the growth into an expert. Therefore, research, for our teacher educators, is critical.

(Cai)

In both university types, researcher identity was formed in response to external research expectations. Research demands were driven by job requirements and performance pressure from tenure, annual assessment, and career promotion, which required participants to produce research no matter where they worked. For instance, Tang explained she viewed herself as a researcher because most of her time was allocated to research and fulfilling promotion demands. Otherwise, she could not “supervise postgraduates and apply for [higher-level] grants” without an [associate professor] title.

Although research expectations seemed to influence researcher identity, distinct organisational missions, values, and orientations meant that participants became researchers differently across workplaces. Provincial normal universities, characterised as teaching-oriented, aim to prepare qualified teachers in teaching, while research-oriented first-class normal universities expect to cultivate teachers as researchers. This distinction in institutional

weighting on teaching and research as well as teacher preparation goals seemed to affect participants' perceptions of the purpose of being a researcher.

Participants from provincial normal universities tended to construct themselves as “practical researchers” who emphasised the practical value of research. They argued that their primary mission was to prepare future teachers for local schools. Thus, the need to inform teaching encouraged them to engage in research and embrace researcher identity (e.g., Cai, Cen, Chai). Preparing teachers for future education and the new technological revolution encouraged UBTEs to accept researcher identity, conduct research, and teach prospective teachers to do research (Ce). Similarly, Chong argued that “teaching can be vivid with the combination of teaching with research.” As he elaborated:

UBTEs should be researchers. I don't think contemporary students will learn something valuable from teachers as a transfer station of knowledge, as the amount of information students can receive today is enormous. They can find all the knowledge online. Also, I want to demonstrate how to research their teaching and subjects when they become teachers. (Chong)

In first-class normal universities, researcher identity, characterised as “research-focused”, was often linked to a passion for research, a sense of achievement, and the pursuit of academic goals. Half of the participants in these universities mentioned passion for research as part of their UBTE identities. Tang expressed how she grew to like research as time passed, and her researcher identity was an outcome of both external factors and inner love. For the UBTEs in the first-class normal universities, succeeding in research can bring a

considerable sense of fulfilment, acting as a catalyst for researcher identity formation, as in the following statement:

Research is the most crucial part of me. I feel a strong sense of achievement when I figure out a specific research question, or my paper is revised to a satisfying level, published, and then inspires others. That is the happiest time for me. (Tou)

“Research-focused” identity was also reflected by participants’ commitment to the broader teacher education community. For example, Tian was motivated to be a researcher because of the limited discourse and significant gaps in education between China and developed countries. Hence, she wanted to “first learn western modes, then integrate with our Chinese styles, surpass the original one, and dominate our discourse systems.” Tang and Tie also considered themselves researchers with the aim to “guide future academic development and solve social problems.” Tou mentioned his ambition to be a “facilitator” of global dialogue between western and Chinese academia:

I deliberately introduce classic literature, discussions, and models to my students and colleagues, summarise Chinese experience into the concept through publications and bring it to the international community. Therefore, I am a facilitator of a global dialogue in teacher education. (Tou)

UBTEs discussed research-related parts of their professional identity, which seemed to differ by university type. UBTEs from provincial normal universities highlighted the practical value of research in informing teaching and supervision. UBTEs from first-class normal universities, however, aimed to satisfy their curiosity and contribute to an

international research community.

5.3.3 Teacher-of-Teachers

“Teacher educator” was a relatively new term for most participants, who held a vague understanding of who teacher educators were and regarded “teacher educator” as an “imported concept”. Most learned this term by reading literature conducted in international contexts and seldom used it to describe their identity. However, identity as a “teacher-of-teachers” could be seen, especially when participants were asked how they perceive their work and the differences between their functions and the roles of schoolteachers or other academics.

Specifically, participants stressed the “teacher-of-teachers” identity was affected by their sense of mission, beliefs, and responsibilities (e.g., Chuang, Tian), passion for teaching (e.g., Cen, Tai, Ti), or professional practice (e.g., Chun, Teng, Tou). The “teacher-of-teachers” identity manifested in multiple ways amongst these participants.

Across both types of universities, participants indicated that teaching the next generation of teachers with essential knowledge, skills, and professionalism was the most critical element of their identity (e.g., Cong, Chai, Tian). This suggested that UBTEs’ fundamental perception of their primary responsibilities and mission was relatively similar no matter where they worked, despite the abovementioned differences. For instance, Cai underlined that a “teacher-of-teachers” should be better in teaching skills, ability, and morality than university lecturers in other disciplines, since “the students we teach will become teachers, and further inspire pupils in the long run.” Also, Tiao mentioned that

“teachers-of-teachers” were different from generic university teachers, who just focused on their teaching and research and neglected students’ future employment. Ceng, a veteran UBTE, exemplified this responsibility:

I have been doing this [teacher education] for over 30 years. Our goal is to provide qualified teachers for compulsory education, make them enter and be competent for the profession, and finally be good teachers. (Ceng)

“Role model” was also commonly used by participants across universities to describe their identity in pedagogical modelling (teaching professional expertise) and moral modelling (demonstrating what a good teacher should be like ethically and morally). One obvious case of pedagogical modelling is reflected in the following quote:

I am a teacher-of-teachers, who presents underlying ideas and strategies of teaching methods, such as the approach we use, how we use it, and why. Because students will enter the teaching profession in the future, our teaching should be their scaffold, contributing to their practice. (Teng)

Moral modelling was also seen as part of being a “role model”. A moral model, according to Chun, has a great impact on students’ growth and could avoid any “deviations in the teaching philosophy”. Similarly, Cao explained that “teacher-of-teachers” had a role in developing key teacher qualities in their students:

I think that teachers-of-teachers are reflected in morality and personal pursuit. The key for students to be a good teacher is not their grades or skills but whether they

have the qualities that a good teacher should possess, alongside the strong willpower and desire to be a good teacher, which needs us to inspire and enlighten. (Cao)

Although “teacher educator” was regarded as a new term in the Chinese context, participants recognised their “teacher-of-teachers” identity when identifying that they teach prospective teachers rather than other professionals. It meant that their work had particular characteristics that other university teachers’ work did not have, particularly their responsibilities as role models in pedagogy and morality.

5.3.4 Teacher of Tradition

“Teacher of tradition” identity was expressed across both types of universities. It can be distinguished from the “teacher-of-teachers” and “teacher in higher education institution” identities by its connection with being an educator in the Chinese context. It indicates that participants were affected greatly by Confucian culture, and expected to be good teachers as depicted in Chinese tradition, norms, and culture, and further, pass on the qualities that good teachers should have to their students. For instance, Chen clarified their view of teachers’ role in passing on cultural imperatives:

Both university teachers and schoolteachers conduct their activities mainly for educational purposes, which is related to their identity as teachers. So, what is a teacher? They should bring truth, goodness, beauty, and especially the better parts of culture to the younger generation through subjective construction, equal dialogue, and exemplary behaviours, so that civilisation can continue and evolve and society becomes better. The image of teachers is a bit like Prometheus – the fire thief. They

preserve and pass on the flame of civilisation of our community and communicate with other torches, exchanging culture. (Chen)

The “teacher of tradition” identity embodied traditional characteristics of Confucian culture and tradition, indicating that traditional teacher images and social norms seemed to reproduce in participants’ identities. The Confucian tradition’s influence manifested in UBTEs’ responses in three ways: knowledge-focused teaching and learning, the spirit of selfless dedication, and close and pastoral teacher-student relationships.

A famous piece of Chinese literature has described that a good teacher can “propagate the doctrine, impart professional expertise, and resolve doubts” (师者，所以传道授业解惑也). Following this tradition, participants identified themselves as “knowledge transmitters”, who are highly learned and wise, and equip future teachers with essential expertise (e.g., Cai, Cen, Chong, Chou). Tou, who completed his doctorate and worked as a UBTE in the US, also mentioned how he encountered a culture shock in role expectations between his understanding of an ideal UBTE and what Chinese preservice teachers wanted him to be. Specifically, he tried to guide students with open discussion and communication, but students preferred him to transmit the knowledge-oriented “take-home message”:

After returning to China, I found that my students were sometimes confused and wanted me to point out essential concepts, literature, and scholars, which I did not do in the US. So, I gradually changed my lecture style based on their suggestions. (Tou)

Moreover, being good teachers who are responsible, selfless, and committed to their students and work were identities constructed by participants in both types of universities,

with references to “responsibilities”, “beliefs”, “conscience”, “sacrifice”, and “sense of mission” (e.g., Cong, Ceng, Tu). These traditions and norms guided them, especially when they suffered from conflicts between personal expectations of being a good teacher and organisational expectations of being research active, as the below statement indicates:

I would like to take more time to research. Nevertheless, as a good teacher, having research output is not enough. I should have a positive impact on students, so I am still happy to devote more time to my students, even with colossal research pressure.

(Tian)

“Rapport with students” was the third manifestation of Confucian influence on UBTEs. They regarded offering professional assistance and emotional and pastoral care to students as a part of their work, viewing themselves as “friends” and “parents”. For instance, Ting preferred to create a relaxing classroom atmosphere and keep in touch with students. Additionally, Tu referenced the traditional saying “a teacher for a day is a father for a lifetime” (一日为师, 终身为父), indicating that a teacher should be responsible and care for their students as they treat their children:

I felt like their father. In ancient societies, the teacher-student relationship was identical to the father-son relationship. (Tu)

The “teacher of tradition” identity was based on Chinese Confucian culture and was particular to Chinese UBTEs. Specifically, indigenous conceptions of teaching and learning may influence how the “teacher of tradition” identity is formed.

5.3.5 Collaborator

Interviewees viewed themselves as preservice and in-service teachers' collaborators, highlighting reciprocal relations between UBTEs and their students. For instance, Cai shared his understanding of interpersonal relationships, and said: "the relationships between teachers and students, university teachers and schoolteachers, or university and government departments are often collaborative. We help others and achieve ourselves simultaneously."

Some UBTEs saw themselves as collaborators because they needed to compensate for their experience and knowledge deficits. Academic pathway UBTEs sought schoolteacher collaboration to help increase their credibility with preservice teachers and the teaching profession. Although it is common for Chinese UBTEs to be academics and not classroom teachers, their credibility is still questioned by preservice teachers and schools. For instance, Tan recalled how he suffered from difficulties in teaching practice-based courses, and transforming the theory he learned into professional practice. UBTEs without K-12 teaching experience cannot convince their students and school mentors with sound stories and evidence drawn from practice (e.g., Ting, Te, Teng). Some UBTEs saw themselves as collaborators, needing to learn from students and schoolteachers (e.g., Chou, Te), and do research with them (e.g., Tiao).

Provincial normal universities' UBTEs gave particular attention to their collaborations with preservice teachers. They felt closely linked to their preservice teachers as fellow teachers, which opened them to learning from preservice teachers. These UBTEs spent much time in schools, supervising preservice teachers in practice. This enhanced their sense of

connection to, and professional collaboration with, preservice teachers. For example:

I am a collaborator with students. The relationship between students and us is a kind of cooperation. We promote students' development, and students, in turn, make us better. (Cai)

Participants from first-class normal universities seemed to pay more attention to brokering relationships with schools and schoolteachers, emphasising collaboration with schoolteachers in teacher professional development programmes, research projects, and hybrid spaces between schools and universities. Tang, for instance, described herself as a “contactor” or “bridge” in the school-university partnership. Similarly, Tuan mentioned her “facilitator” role in stimulating the engagement and creativity of schoolteachers in teamwork.

Although participants from both university types identified a collaborator identity, there was a difference in the meaning and purpose of collaboration across university types. For provincial normal university participants, they highlighted reciprocal relationships with preservice teachers, echoing their focus on teaching, while for first-class normal university participants, it was centred on bridging between university and schools, often around research projects.

5.3.6 Coach not Gatekeeper

The metaphor of “gatekeeper” to the teaching profession, particularly in professional ethics and morality, was mentioned by only three participants (Ce, Chai, Ting). More commonly, participants from both university types used metaphors of “coaches” or “guides”, rather than keepers of standards or gatekeepers to the teaching profession to describe their

identity with respect to developing competence in preservice teachers. Although their institutions have the power to decide if preservice teachers are good enough to be teachers, UBTEs positioned themselves alongside the students in their descriptions of professional identity. A common metaphor was soccer. UBTEs used this sporting analogy to describe teacher preparation as a football competition. Compared to a “defender” who guards against students, they position themselves as a “coach”, who passes on professional knowledge and skills to their players (i.e., preservice teachers), accompanies them to practice playing “football” and improve practical competence in real competition (i.e., school settings), and finally guides them to grow to be qualified “footballers” and “shoot” at the goal of the teaching profession one day (e.g., Cao, Ceng, Tong, Tuan). By this, they meant that students were well prepared to find work in kindergartens or schools. Other recurring metaphors used by UBTEs that seem to align with helping and supporting, rather than judging, were “crutch”, “scaffold”, “guide”, and “lighthouse”. While UBTEs may mean different things by these terms, their recurrence in the interviews across contexts suggested that a position as a supporter, not an arbiter of competence, was taken up by participants.

Some also explicitly rejected gatekeeping, explaining that gatekeeping belonged elsewhere in the system: with the local educational bureau, teacher certificate organiser, and school principals. Tai explained that “whether or not the school will ultimately hire students depends on student quality.” Similarly, Tong elaborated that “gatekeeper” was not a suitable identity for them, since their student quality was far better than the standard criteria for a teacher:

We teach according to the curriculum norms, professional standards, beliefs, knowledge, and competencies, and move forward with the educational ideal. Thus, our students are basically above par. (Tong)

The “coaching” identity was often aligned with practicum supervision. There were different attitudes to this part of UBTEs’ work across university types. In provincial normal universities, practicum supervision was viewed as an essential part of preparing preservice teachers, and effective supervision was seen as an important indicator of UBTEs’ performance. UBTEs are required to visit practicum schools regularly and supervise and comment on preservice teachers’ professional practice. These activities seemed to support the development of a coach-type, supportive identity. Ce developed himself as an “active participant” in practicum because he believed in the benefits of practicum for the preservice teachers. Similarly, Cai’s awareness of collaborating within and outside the “ivory tower” was clear, stating, “I put practicum coach in an important position, making schools accept our students and support our teaching.”

However, participants from first-class normal universities put less weight on practicum, which seemed to reduce viewing themselves as a “coach”. Few UBTEs identified themselves as practicum supervisors, especially experienced UBTEs with more than six years teaching experience in university. These UBTEs had usually become associate professors and engaged more in research and less in practicum supervision. They disliked practicum due to its time-consuming nature, and tended to avoid this responsibility. As Tang and Tai stated, “I do not want to visit practicum. It takes a lot of time and energy. I am very sorry for students if

I cannot do it well” or “practicum is not our business most of the time. We [experienced UBTEs] have taken a backseat and let younger teachers participate in the practicum.”

Rather than taking up a gatekeeper role in policing teachers’ quality, most participants saw themselves as coaches of their students. UBTEs in provincial normal universities seemed to associate their coach identity with practicum supervision, and saw practicum as a key part of their work and coaching as important to their professional identity. Few in first-class normal universities identified as coaches; they seldom undertook practicum supervision.

5.3.7 Questioner

Being someone who actively participates in critically discussing, reflecting, and questioning educational concepts, practices, and systems was part of some UBTEs’ professional identity. Participants in first-class normal universities mentioned the importance of asking questions through reflection to inform professional learning, improve research ability, promote educational equity and quality, and deal with educational issues. Tuo viewed himself as a “critical reflector” and practised this identity through his academic publications to discuss and draw attention to specific education issues in theories or practices. Facing existing educational problems and challenges, such as corporal punishment, assessment and outcome-oriented discourse, Tao was aware of the influence of culture, power and tradition in education. In response, his UBTE identity included critic, reflector, and advisor for modern education. He saw part of his role as calling for change to these problematic educational practices, and intended to raise questions about them through his scholarship and professional practice. Similar perceptions were shared by Chai, who stated that reflecting critically allows

her to raise questions about teacher preparation goals, education reforms and her teacher education practice. She also stressed that higher teacher quality and capacity, especially reflective awareness and ability, were needed in a rapidly changing world:

As times change, what students need and their core literacy as future teachers are changing. We, as UBTEs, must be critical and reflective, so that we facilitate preservice teachers' growth and continually improve curriculum and practicum instruction. (Chai)

Being a questioner is seen by some UBTEs as part of professional identity, which seems to arise from their roles as researchers and advisors and their concern about the future. This identity differs from others in the data because it is about critiquing the status quo and asking questions about wider educational issues. Through their teaching and research, these UBTEs hope to contribute to change over time by asking and answering questions about education broadly.

5.3.8 Doctoral Student

Following academic pathways, Chinese UBTEs usually graduate with higher degrees before entering higher education teaching. However, some participants in this study still connected with a doctoral student identity. Having a doctoral degree confers status and advantages, so being a doctoral student was a significant part of their journey to UBTE status. For instance, Ti recalled that she had huge advantages because only a few UBTEs held doctorates when she qualified. Meanwhile, others' positive evaluations of her academic ability and achievement enhanced her doctoral student identity during the first three years of

her career.

Additionally, transitioning from doctoral students to UBTEs is sometimes challenging, with changes in expectations and demands as they move to be independent scholars and teachers rather than students. This had consequences for how they saw themselves as teachers:

When I was a student, my supervisor tolerated my mistakes. After I became his colleague, no one treated me as a student anymore. I had to be responsible for my actions, although I often think I am subconsciously a student. (Te)

This unfamiliarity with their new role as teacher educators made participants choose to hold their “doctoral student” identity even after they were appointed as lecturers. As Tong explained, he is “both a teacher and a student” since this transition is a long-term learning process:

I was not familiar with my new role at the beginning. I did not get into the state and know what I would do. I felt like a teaching assistant. Just watched and followed how other lecturers taught and learnt how to prepare for my courses. I slowly adapt to it every day in my work. (Tong)

Moving from doctoral students to scholars and teachers is an important transition when UBTE preparation is largely through academic pathways. It is the equivalent of the shift from schoolteachers to UBTEs in practitioner pathways. This identity may arise from the feeling that holding a doctorate conveys status in the research-oriented higher education context, or from the difficulties in transitioning from being students to independent

colleagues, scholars and educators.

5.4 Discussion and Implications

The interviews with 34 UBTEs suggested that UBTE professional identity comprises many parts, which are closely linked to the types of work UBTEs are asked to do in different settings. In line with previous studies of UBTEs grown in the practitioner pathway (Swennen et al., 2008; Tryggvason, 2012), Chinese UBTEs also constructed identities as teachers in HEI, researchers, teachers-of-teachers, collaborators, and coaches, but how these identities are held and understood differed from previous findings. First, forming a teacher in HEI identity resonates with previous studies (e.g., Swennen et al., 2008), but this identity establishment is much easier for academically-prepared UBTEs than those who were schoolteachers before (Gong et al., 2021). Chinese UBTEs first adapted to this institutional identity because institutional authority gave them a sense of security and credibility. In studies of practitioner pathway UBTEs, transitioning from schools to universities was tough; they needed to develop new pedagogy, work with adult learners, and adapt to new institutional requirements that underlined research and scholarship (Williams & Ritter, 2010; Griffiths et al., 2014).

Second, almost everyone had a PhD degree and systematic research training, which explains why participants identified themselves as researchers. Both types of universities underscored research productivity and output by explicit and implicit means, such as probationary contracts, workload, performance assessment, tenure, career promotion, and “publish or perish culture” (Yuan, 2019), which led participants to develop a solid researcher

identity. This result contrasts with prior research that establishing a researcher identity was challenging for UBTEs transitioning from schoolteachers to UBTEs (Griffiths et al., 2010). They encountered a sense of insecurity, felt de-skilled, and questioned their research ability due to limited research experience, lack of institutional support and agency, and performance pressure (Hökkä et al., 2012; Murray et al., 2011).

The “teacher-of-teachers” identity reported by participants confirmed that teaching the next generation of teachers and role modelling are part of UBTE main tasks, which aligns with previous studies (Ellis et al., 2014; Lunenberg et al., 2014). “Teacher-of-teachers” might mean “teacher educator” in other jurisdictions; however, Chinese UBTEs saw this as an imported idea. Participants were committed to teachers, teaching and education, and felt responsible for preparing teachers but had not adopted the “teacher educators” label. Overall, being a teacher-of-teachers may be a widely shared identity across different contexts with UBTEs from different pathways. This might seem logical, as this is the task they are doing. Both the academic pathway UBTEs in this study and practitioner pathway UBTEs in other studies (Harrison & Mckeon, 2010; Khan, 2011; Yuan, 2016) explain this identity by conveying respect for teaching as a profession; they are very connected to teachers and teaching as the end goal of their work (rather than, for example, teaching about psychology for its own sake).

Fourth, being a collaborator also echoes earlier studies (Harrison & Mckeon, 2010; Lunenberg et al., 2014). However, Chinese UBTEs formed this identity for different reasons. In contrast to previous participants who were familiar with school settings and gained

credibility from school partners, participants in this study had little experience in school settings. Consequently, their credibility was more likely to be questioned by students and schoolteachers. The collaborator identity seemed to be part of building credibility with practitioners.

Fifth, this study partially confirms the work of Lunenberg, Dengerink, and Korthagen (2014) about coach identity but reveals different perceptions about the gatekeeper role.

Although the gatekeeper identity was mentioned, many participants rejected it and instead saw themselves as coaches, with explanations that deciding who can step into the teaching profession, the gatekeeper role, belongs to other professionals based on the Chinese licensure and employment system. The “gate” is not placed at the end of teacher education. UBTEs instead play the coach role, equipping preservice teachers with professional expertise and attempting to prepare teachers to a level far greater than the appointment standard. Hence, they tended to identify themselves as a “coach” rather than a “gatekeeper”.

Three identities found in this study may reflect the particular circumstances of Chinese UBTEs in academic pathways. First, the “teacher of tradition” identity seems to arise from the Chinese context. Abundant ancient poems and literature in China depict teachers as wise and knowledgeable in teaching content and responding efficiently to students’ questions. Meanwhile, a good teacher is likened to a “silkworm” exhausting its silk until death, or a “candle” burning itself out to give light, meaning that teachers should have a spirit of sacrifice and a solid commitment to students. Rapport with students is also highlighted. Overall, Confucian culture provides an image of a good teacher, who is erudite, highly

learned, generous, humanitarian, devoted, and establishes a good rapport with students, influencing Chinese UBTEs to form a teacher identity with the above qualities. Second, being a “doctoral student” relates to Chinese UBTEs’ preparation through academic pathways. The doctoral experience laid UBTEs’ research foundation and brought them confidence in their competitive workplaces. They were familiar with the HEI rather than with schools, leading them to identify with their previous role in the institution, that of a doctoral student. The questioner identity arose from a desire to be part of change, or of solving educational problems through UBTEs’ work as teachers and researchers. With their knowledge and perspectives, these UBTEs sought to contribute to the wider education system.

Workplaces seemed to make a difference in the reported identities of UBTEs. These findings accord with previous findings that the institutional environment with varied workloads and organisational positionings shapes UBTEs’ professional identity (Menter, 2011). Under the subtle impact of institutional climate, participants from provincial normal universities had a solid commitment to students and the local community, which guided them to value practicum supervision, engage with preservice teachers and practically-focused research activities. However, their counterparts in first-class normal universities tended to be research-active and display higher and wider visions of their work as a benefit to national and international communities and academia. These orientations explained why participants differed in identity perceptions as researchers, collaborators, coaches, questioners, and doctoral students across university types. Regarding researcher identity, those from first-class normal universities identified themselves as “research-focused” with solid intrinsic

motivations to satisfy research interests, establish themselves in a specific field, and benefit a broader community (Harrison & Mckeeon, 2010). However, their counterparts in provincial normal universities, characterised as “practical researchers”, preferred practical research to inform teaching and help preservice teachers effectively transition from instructors to experts (McGregor et al., 2010). Regarding collaborator or coach identity, participants in provincial normal universities stressed practicum supervision as key. They aspired to influence and develop students’ potential via open discussions, collaborative communications, and fieldwork, and viewed themselves as collaborators or coaches. Those in first-class normal universities seldom viewed themselves as practicum supervisors, because it conflicted with their time allocation and work priorities as active researchers. They tended to develop as questioners or celebrated their past identity as doctoral students, which better matched their institutional orientations and brought them credibility and legitimacy. As discussed above, most reported identities were mentioned by participants from both university types. As noted, some identities seemed to be slightly different in the two contexts, and there were key points around research and practicum in particular, where workplaces seem to play a role in the identities taken up by UBTEs.

For three key identities, all centred on teaching; the institutional environment did not seem to be an influence: teachers in HEI, teachers of teachers, and teacher of tradition. Despite being in different university types, participants experienced similar transitions from doctoral students to university lecturers, leading to commonalities in their reported identities. UBTEs from both university types had similar constructions for “teachers in higher education

institutions”, which were reported as being dominant early in their careers. Additionally, a “teacher-of-teachers” identity had similar meanings for both groups. The mission to nurture the next generation of teachers and be role models seemed to be determined by the unique nature and caring culture of teacher education as an activity, rather than the place where UBTEs worked. Similarly, Confucian culture and tradition affected what it means to be an educator in the Chinese context. These ideas seemed to underpin a consensus between both groups about the “teacher of tradition” identity.

In considering the current findings, it is important to consider the study’s limitations. While 34 participants is a reasonable number for an interview study, they cannot be taken to represent all Chinese UBTEs’ views. The patterns and ideas found in this study were the outcomes of a thematic analysis, carefully conducted, but subject to researcher preconceptions or biases. The co-authors come from two jurisdictions, providing insider and outsider views on the data, but it is important to remain open to other interpretations when considering these findings.

If teacher educators are key to a quality teaching force (S White et al., 2020), how they perceive themselves as teacher educators influences the quality of teacher education programmes and their graduates. This study suggests that different pathways to being a UBTE bring different identity patterns and challenges. Additionally, this study highlights the impact of context on UBTE’s identity: both the institutional context and the broader national and cultural milieu in which teacher education occurs are implicated in the Chinese UBTE’s views of themselves and their work. For people who are hiring UBTEs, or for policymakers

and teacher education programme designers, this study has several implications. First, the pathway to being a UBTE leads to different identity challenges and professional learning and induction needs. Academically-qualified UBTEs without experience as schoolteachers may need explicit support to make an effective transition into UBTE work, including ways to build collaborations with schools and schoolteachers. Second, the type of work valued by the institution seems to shape UBTE's views of themselves, so institutions that wish to shift their practice in teacher education, perhaps towards closer liaison with schools, need to attend to how they convey messages to UBTEs through contracts, promotions and giving time for different tasks. Teaching and teacher education seems to have a moral and ethical dimension and an emotional component. Even in HEIs, teaching appears to be associated with sacrifice, virtue, caring, and connection. This insight might help HEIs better understand UBTE work within the academy and shape teacher education in ways that allow connections to be made and teaching to be modelled well. Furthermore, UBTEs' professional identity comprises elements that might be particular to UBTE work, no matter where they are, and elements that are particular to the jurisdiction they work in and the type of institution they work for. This insight could help institutions design roles and professional learning for UBTEs to help them develop effective practices in preparing new teachers and find ways to motivate or incentivise elements of UBTEs' work. Knowing that some things seem to be characteristic of teacher education across contexts shifts the conversation from individual preferences about teaching or research, to situating choices about approaches in a wider understanding of why teacher education works the way it does. Finally, there are implications of the differences between

university types for the learning experience of preservice teachers. Students at different types of normal universities have UBTEs who see themselves and their tasks differently. This likely results in different approaches to teaching, content selection and support by the UBTEs, impacting what is learned and how it is learned. Further work is needed to understand how different UBTE identities and ways of working might impact preservice teachers as they move into their careers in kindergartens or schools.

5.5 Conclusion

This study unpacks how 34 UBTEs, from 11 HEIs in China, perceive their professional identity, and reveals similarities and differences in their identity perceptions across two types of universities. These findings are beneficial to understand professional lives and identity perceptions of academically-prepared UBTEs, in China. While further research is needed to establish which of these identity perceptions might apply elsewhere, these findings may also relate to other academically-prepared UBTEs, thereby giving voice to this under-researched group in teacher education, letting them be seen, receive more attention, and claim their legitimate membership in the teacher education community. The seemingly core and consistent elements of UBTE professional identity that were identified in the literature on schoolteacher preparation for UBTE work and in this study could be a starting point for international discourse about teacher educators and their work, to work on global issues (e.g., where the next generation of teacher educators will come from, teaching-research challenges) collaboratively. Finally, UBTE perceptions of their identity will impact their work with future teachers, shaping their knowledge and practice, as well as impacting how

teacher education programmes function. There seem to be aspects of teacher educator identity that go beyond being a teacher in a higher education institution, and these aspects are the ones that are particularly related to preservice teacher development as teachers: passing on teaching traditions, coaching, supervising practice and working in the middle of the research-practice nexus for example. Chinese education policymakers could consider using the term teacher educator to signal these differences, guide organisational practices in recruitment, promotion and professional learning, and encourage further research into UBTE work to understand and support this specialised occupational group.

Chapter 6 Study Two

Study one investigated what Chinese UBTEs' professional identity comprises, and identified eight sub-identities. Although similar identity perceptions were found in the existing identity literature about practitioner-pathway UBTEs, how Chinese UBTEs perceive and understand these sub-identities was slightly different than in previous research. New sub-identities also emerged from the data, reflecting the unique characteristics of being a UBTE in the Chinese culture and context. These findings reveal the complex nature and multi-faceted characteristics of being a Chinese UBTE. However, there is scant information on how UBTEs value and reconcile different elements of their professional identity, how different sub-identities play out for an individual, and what tensions and challenges UBTE may encounter forming each sub-identity. The research questions and theoretical framework of study two are therefore informed and developed from the findings of study one (Chapter 5).

Thus, study two (Chapter 6, Liang et al., 2023b) adopts Stryker's view of identity theory (Stryker, 2002) that individuals' identity is multi-faceted and comprises several aspects ranked in a hierarchical order in which some are more dominant than others. The paper that comprises Chapter 6 uses this idea to further examine 34 Chinese UBTEs' professional identity, focusing on what they consider most salient. It explores the features of Chinese UBTEs' most salient sub-identity, and what influences their choices about the most salient aspects of their professional identity. It also presents how multiple sub-identities play out for an individual UBTE. This study addresses the second research gap outlined earlier in this thesis (sections 1.3.2 and 3.3) by uncovering the multi-layered nature of UBTEs' professional

identity, UBTEs' engagement and commitment to relevant work and identities, and tensions and difficulties in balancing competing demands between research expectations and teaching imperatives. There are practical implications from this study for HEIs and UBTEs in resolving conflicts in teaching and research-related roles, avoiding identity crises and improving UBTEs' professional development.

As noted previously, I noted that the following manuscript submitted as part of this thesis uses the term "identities" to present the salient elements of UBTEs' professional identity in the manuscripts. Considering that study two aims to explore the salience of different aspects of the UBTE professional identity, using "sub-identities" would be a clearer choice.

Researcher or Teacher-of-Teachers: What Affects the Salient Identity of Chinese University-Based Teacher Educators?

Abstract

University-based teacher educators' (UBTEs) identities impact their work, engagement, and professional development. While a deeper understanding of UBTE identity is emerging, how UBTEs value and reconcile different elements of professional identity is under-researched. This study examines 34 Chinese UBTEs' salient aspects of their professional identity. Two salient identities emerged and were distributed differently: a "teacher-of-teachers" identity prevalent in provincial normal universities and a "researcher" identity prevalent in first-class normal universities. Four ways these two identities interact are presented, describing how UBTEs negotiate a tension between "researcher" and "teacher-of-teachers" identities. This tension shapes UBTEs' work and how teacher education programs function.

Keywords: University-based teacher educators; Identity salience; "Teacher-of-teachers" identity; "Researcher" identity; Chinese teacher education

6.1 Introduction

University-based teacher educators (UBTEs), who engage in the formal development of preservice and in-service teachers, are a key component of quality education systems (Vloet & Van Swet, 2010). To date, studies have examined UBTE professional expertise (Berry, 2007), workplace practice (Yamin-Ali, 2018), and professional learning (Ping et al., 2021). Less is known about how UBTEs perceive themselves in their work – their professional identity. Although a few studies have identified common UBTE identities: “teacher-of-teachers”, “researcher”, and “teacher in higher education” (Griffiths et al., 2014; Swennen et al., 2010), more attention has been paid to UBTEs who began their career as school teachers, than those from academic backgrounds with little or no K-12 teaching experience (Liang et al., 2023a; Newberry, 2014). How UBTEs perceive themselves and what they do in their work may be shaped by these different pathways (Czerniawski et al., 2017; White, 2019). UBTEs’ identity perceptions might shape the curriculum they offer and the pedagogies they use, impacting the quality of the preservice teachers they prepare. Given that UBTE identity has been shown to affect their disposition, work engagement and commitment, and professional development (Izadinia, 2014; McAnulty & Cuenca, 2014), unpacking UBTE professional identity is key to understanding their work.

China is an example of a jurisdiction where UBTEs commonly enter teacher education from an academic pathway, rather than from being schoolteachers. Knowing more about Chinese UBTEs’ professional identity and how they emerge from negotiation of multiple tasks and roles deepens our understanding of teacher educators and their work. A

nuanced understanding of Chinese UBTEs' professional identity provides a comparison point for understanding teacher educators' work in other contexts, suggests professional learning needs for teacher educators and provides insights for developing teacher education.

6.1.1 Understanding "Identity"

Identity refers to how individuals see themselves (Rodgers & Scott, 2008), with different understandings based on psychological, sociological, and postmodern perspectives. This study views identity as a bridge between self and society (Burke & Stets, 2009), rather than as roles purely constrained by social structure, or as psychological identity completely influenced by subjective experience (Callero, 1985). Identity is conceptualised here as internalised meanings, connected with specific roles people hold in society (Stets & Serpe, 2013). Roles are seen as the basis of identity, providing a set of behavioural expectations, rights, and responsibilities. Identity develops by accepting, rejecting, negotiating, and internalising the meaning connected with roles (Pinnegar, 2005).

Identity is multi-faceted and multi-layered, as individuals negotiate different social relationships in their roles (Stets & Serpe, 2013). For UBTEs, this involves teaching, research, practicum supervision, curriculum development, and negotiation of diverse professional relationships across settings (Lunenberget al., 2014). These multiple tasks lead to perceptions of multiple identities, such as teacher-of-teachers, researchers, and teachers in higher education (Liang et al., 2023a; Swennen et al., 2010). These identities are not equally relevant; for individuals, some are more salient than others (Williams, 2014). People have parts of their identity that they see as most active or relevant in particular settings. The higher

identity is ranked in a hierarchical order, the more likely this identity is actively enacted (Morris, 2013), and the more salient that identity is. However, little literature examines how multiple identities interact and how salient identities affect behaviours (Burke, 2003).

6.1.2 Teacher Educators' Professional Identity

Teacher educator identity is intricate and malleable (Davey, 2013; Dinkelman, 2011; Izadinia, 2014), reflecting the nature of teacher education work. Drawing on 25 articles, Swennen et al. (2010) reported four sub-identities that constituted the main identity of teacher educator: schoolteacher, teacher in higher education, teacher-of-teachers, and researcher. The reviewed studies were mainly conducted in European, North American, and Australian contexts where UBTEs grew through practitioner pathways (Davey, 2013), and experienced transitions from schoolteachers to UBTEs. Only a few studies of UBTEs identity explore contexts (e.g., China, Israel) where academic pathways are common (Liang et al., 2023a), but those that exist suggest differences in UBTE identity are shaped by UBTEs' pathway into teacher education (Gong et al., 2021), and their workplaces and jurisdictions (White, 2019). Thus, uncovering how academic pathways and workplaces impact UBTE identity could improve our understanding of teacher educators and their work. Even in jurisdictions with practitioner pathways to teacher education, the prevalence of research-oriented demands in higher education institutions (HEIs) (Smith & Flores, 2019) means that academic-pathway UBTEs will likely move from "peripherality" to the centre of international discourse about teacher education. To better understand this phenomenon, the present study focuses on the

identity development of less-researched UBTEs who work in a system with a predominantly academic pathway into teacher education.

A challenge for UBTEs is to negotiate multiple identities, trying to make them more or less harmonise (Beijaard et al., 2004). Due to limited time and resources, there are tensions among identities, resulting in some identities being dominant, and others peripheral, leading to dissonance among identities (Dinkelman, 2011). An increasing number of studies examine how UBTEs experience obstacles in balancing two primary roles – teaching and research (e.g., Czerniawski et al., 2017; Murray & Male, 2005). For some who consider teaching as the “anchor of professional identity” (Murray, 2008, p. 119), their substantial teaching loads and commitment to teaching and students leave little time for research (Griffiths et al., 2014). However, high-stakes performance systems give more credit to research than teaching, devalue teaching, and impede UBTEs’ teaching and practicum engagement (Boyd & Harris, 2010). Whether these two identities support or constrain each other and which one is dominant or peripheral for UBTEs remains under-researched.

6.1.3 Factors that Influence Teacher Educators’ Professional Identity

Existing research illustrates that UBTEs develop their professional identity via the interplay of factors at three levels: individual factors, related to UBTEs’ characteristics or experiences (Dinkelman, 2011; Hökkä et al., 2012); interpersonal factors, involving interaction with “significant others” (Gong et al., 2021; Murray et al., 2011); and contextual factors from organisational and social-cultural contexts (Boyd & Harris, 2010; Yuan, 2017).

Individual factors frame the development of UBTE professional identity. Self-study,

reflection, and professional practice deepen UBTEs' understanding of their work and who they are (Griffiths et al., 2014; Izadinia, 2014). Professional commitment, beliefs, and agency play strengthening roles (Hökkä et al., 2012; Murray et al., 2011). A schoolteacher background can support UBTE identity by making them feel relevant and credible (Murray & Male, 2005). Moreover, transitioning from expert teacher to novice UBTE can lead to feelings of inadequacy (McAnulty & Cuenca, 2014). Pressure to participate in research can lead to resistance from new UBTEs who continue to identify as schoolteachers (Boyd & Harris, 2010; Murray et al., 2011).

UBTE professional identity is also established on “the images and expectations created by others” (Vloet & van Swet, 2010, p. 151), mainly through three interpersonal relationships: contact with colleagues, schoolteachers, and preservice teachers (Griffiths et al., 2014; Harrison & Mckeon, 2010). A positive impact on UBTE professional identity can be found in collaborating with colleagues and school mentors, through communities of practice, research projects, and university-school partnerships (Hökkä et al., 2012; Kastner et al., 2019). Additionally, positive feedback and recognition by preservice teachers make UBTEs feel legitimate in their role (Gong et al., 2021).

Contextual factors, such as national and organisational norms, traditions, cultures, discourses, and practice, shape UBTEs' professional identity (Dinkelman, 2011; Murray & Male, 2005). Evaluation systems that measure publication quality and quantity, have exerted research pressure on UBTEs. They are asked to be not only a knowledge consumer, but also a knowledge producer, which can conflict with their professional beliefs and commitment to

being good teachers and lead to identity crises (Tryggvason, 2012; Yuan, 2017). Inadequate organisational support further results in UBTEs feeling powerless, and prevents UBTEs from positioning themselves as researchers and practitioners (Yamin-Ali, 2018). If organisational expectations are matched with support, they can act as an enabler for developing UBTE identities (Hökkä et al., 2012).

6.2 Chinese Teacher Education and Teacher Educators

Chinese teacher education is a multi-institutional system (Shi & Englert, 2008), and it is university-based. The universities include research-oriented first-class normal or comprehensive universities, and teaching-oriented provincial normal universities and colleges. Normal is a term that, in China, means a teacher education-focused institution. Comprehensive means offering a range of subjects with less focus on teacher preparation. First-class and provincial normal institutions have different orientations, teacher education goals, and qualification levels. First-class normal universities are research-intensive, usually affiliated with the Ministry of Education and supported by national finance. They offer teacher education programmes mainly at postgraduate levels to nurture excellent teachers with global competence. UBTEs in these institutions have high levels of qualifications and achievement, excellent research records, and work towards tenure. Provincial normal universities are mainly teaching-oriented, typically focus on professional and vocational courses at undergraduate and/or postgraduate levels, and prepare qualified teachers for local schools. These institutions highly value teaching and university-school partnership.

Chinese UBTEs usually enter the profession as doctoral students or academics with doctorates. They have no school teaching experience (Liang et al., 2023a). This contrasts with UBTEs in other jurisdictions, such as England, Australia, and New Zealand, who have typically worked as certified and experienced schoolteachers (Boyd & Harris, 2010; Murray & Male, 2005). Chinese UBTEs typically have two responsibilities: teaching and research (Liang et al., 2023a).

Chinese teacher education also experiences internationally recognisable competing macro-discourses between research performativity and practice turn (Ye et al., 2019). Research performativity includes audits, quality assurance, and standardisation (Mok, 2003), while the practice turn stresses practice engagement and university-school partnership (Velzen et al., 2009). These competing discourses cause a conflict between academic and professional orientations in Chinese teacher education, affecting UBTEs' work and identity.

Managerialism and accountability have become prevalent in Chinese HEIs (Cao et al., 2019). "Universitisation" reform since 1999 has opened up teacher education to institutions beyond normal universities and colleges, which previously had a monopoly on teacher preparation. This policy encouraged comprehensive universities, characterised as research-intensive, to prepare preservice and in-service teachers (Shi & Englert, 2008). Meanwhile, the "amalgamation" of normal colleges into university sectors since 1952 has changed Chinese teacher education structurally (Shi & Englert, 2008), manifesting in added requirements for research engagement and productivity. Since 2015, the "Double First-Class" initiative has increased research competition by selecting universities and disciplines for additional

financial and development support, mainly based on their research performance. The link between research performance and funding further affects UBTEs' probationary contracts, salary, tenure, and promotion (Yuan, 2017).

Consistent with the global practice turn in teacher education (Velzen et al., 2009), the Chinese government and scholars pay attention to the long-term separation of research and practice in teacher preparation (Ye et al., 2019, p. 765). First-class normal or comprehensive universities usually devalue maintaining relationships with schools because of their fundamental research orientation. However, UBTEs without school teaching experience are criticised for not knowing the realities of schools and school teaching (Liang et al., 2023a). To address this issue, reform policies outlining practicum and practice-based curriculum were promulgated (MoE, 2011b). A new mode of “university-government-school (U-G-S) partnership” has been established to enhance three-way collaboration in teacher preparation (MoE, 2010, 2014), and to encourage HEIs to employ both UBTEs and excellent schoolteachers and to cooperate with schools in teaching and research (MoE, 2017). Although these measures stimulate close relationships between UBTEs and schools, teaching and practicum supervision loads conflict with institutional expectations of being research active. UBTEs encounter difficulties in balancing teaching- and research-related work and in forming a clear identity as a teacher-of-teachers or a researcher (Cao et al., 2019). The lack of Chinese teacher educator professional standards further exacerbates the research-teaching divide and identity conflicts. The qualities, competencies and activities of effective Chinese UBTEs remain unclear.

Little is known about how UBTEs balance the competing demands of professionally-oriented and research-oriented teacher education macro-discourses, within institutions that are positioned differently in a national education system. The professional identity that UBTEs develop is one way to see how they have balanced the demands placed on them. Exploring how Chinese UBTEs resolve competing demands through professional identity with multiple elements and which parts of their professional identity are most salient to them in their work is important for understanding how and why UBTEs do their work the way they do. In addition, knowing how some parts of UBTE professional identity become salient gives insight into the impact of discourses and institutions on individuals' choices and work patterns. This understanding could also provide insights for other jurisdictions as they look at how to recruit, develop and retain UBTEs who can prepare effective teachers. Three overarching questions guided this study:

1. What elements of Chinese UBTEs' professional identity are most salient?
2. What are the main influences that shape their salient identities?
3. To what extent do these salient identities and influences differ between university types?

6.3 Method

6.3.1 Two Types of Universities and Participants

Participants were interviewed at two types of universities in China from the spring to summer of 2021; six were provincial normal universities, and five were first-class normal universities. These eleven universities have provided teacher education as their primary programme for a long time, but vary in institutional traditions, norms, culture, priorities, and

teacher education goals.

The participants were recruited in two phases. First, fourteen participants (7 First-class, 7 Provincial) were recruited through convenience sampling, by seeking the permission of Deans and the consent of participants at institutions where the first author had previous contacts. After initial data analysis, possible patterns in identity salience were identified between the two types of universities. To further examine these emergent patterns, and to include a rich range of experiences in the data, purposive sampling was then conducted to recruit more participants who varied on two dimensions: years of working as UBTE and the type of HEIs in which they worked (Etikan, 2016). Recruitment and interviewing continued until data saturation was reached, with interviews no longer revealing new themes or patterns. There were 34 participants in the study. Table 6.1 presents the demographic characteristics of the participants. Among the 34 participants (13 female, 21 male), half were from provincial normal universities, and half worked in first-class normal universities. All but six participants held PhD degrees. Participants were early, middle, and late-career, with between 1 and 36 years of experience and a relatively even distribution of academic roles. All were teaching different subjects in the teacher education field, ranging from preschool education to primary and secondary education, on full-time contracts. Only three had experience working in K-12 education. Each participant has a pseudonym. Pseudonyms starting with T are participants who work in first-class normal universities, and pseudonyms starting with C are participants who work in provincial normal universities.

Table 6.1

Demographics of Participants (N = 34)

Participants	Years as a UBTE	Job Title	Qualification	K-12 teaching experience (Y/N)	Gender
First-class					
Te	1	L	PhD	N	M
Ting	2	L	PhD	N	F
Tou	3	L	PhD	N	M
Tan	4	AP	PhD	N	F
Tuo	4	L	PhD	N	M
Tun	4	L	PhD	N	M
Tian	4	L	PhD	N	F
Tang	7	AP	PhD	N	F
Tie	10	AP	PhD	N	M
Tai	11	P	PhD	N	M
Teng	13	P	PhD	N	M
Ti	13	AP	PhD	N	F
Tao	14	AP	PhD	Y	M
Tiao	19	AP	Master	N	F
Tu	20	P	PhD	N	M
Tong	29	P	PhD	N	F
Tuan	35	P	PhD	N	F
Provincial					
Che	2	L	PhD	Y	M
Cang	2	L	PhD	N	M
Chui	4	AP	PhD	N	M
Cao	4	L	PhD	N	M
Ce	5	AP	PhD	N	M
Chen	9	P	PhD	N	M
Cui	9	P	PhD	Y	M
Chai	10	P	PhD	N	F
Chao	11	P	PhD	N	M
Cai	12	AP	PhD	N	M
Chong	12	AP	PhD	N	M
Cen	18	L	Master	N	F
Chou	20	P	Bachelor	N	F
Chuang	24	AP	PhD	N	M
Cong	24	AP	Master	N	F
Chun	28	AP	Master	N	F
Ceng	36	P	Bachelor	N	M

	1-5 years	L (29%),	PhD (82%),	N (91%),	F (38%),
First-class (50%),	(35%),	AP (38%),	Other (18%)	Y (9%)	M (62%)
Provincial (50%)	6-14 (32%),	P (33%)			
	15+ (33%)				

Note: F is female, M is male; L is the abbreviation for lecturer, AP is associate professor, P is professor.

6.3.2 Data Collection and Analysis

The semi-structured interviews, each lasting 30 to 90 minutes (56 minutes average), took place in Mandarin and were audio-recorded with participants' permission. The interview protocol included three main themes: UBTEs' perception of their salient identity, reasons for developing their salient identity, and challenges concerning identity formation and work. The questions and tasks were informed by empirical studies investigating identity salience (Stryker & Serpe, 1982). These studies suggested that one way to understand how people resolved competing identities in complex situations was to think about which was most salient in a particular context (Stets & Serpe, 2013). Asking participants to rank identities was a technique used in this work, and yielded useful information that could be readily compared across participants (Stets & Serpe, 2013). A prompt was used to help participants think about which aspect of their professional identity was most salient to them: how they would introduce themselves to others for the first time. This prompt was designed to help the participants think about their professional identity in similar ways, yielding comparable responses, and to make it easier to think about what was most salient to them about their professional identity.

The identities that participants ranked came from their own suggestions of their roles

and identities. First, participants were asked what tasks they had done last week, to help them recall and think about their work. Then, they were asked what professional roles they thought they were filling when they did these tasks, and what identities these roles suggested. The interviewer (the first author) recorded these identities and fed them back to the participant for confirmation. Once the list was agreed, the participant was asked how they would introduce themselves to others for the first time, choosing from the list they had generated. They continued to rank all the identities they had mentioned from most likely to describe themselves to least likely. Then participants were asked to explain the reasons for their ranking, and discuss the challenges to professional identity they faced in each role they had identified.

Each interview was transcribed verbatim in Chinese and then translated into English using translation/back-translation procedures (Brislin, 1970). To ensure trustworthiness, participants were asked to verify the accuracy of the transcripts. A bilingual expert evaluated the equivalence and quality of translation between original and translated texts, and confirmed that the translations were reliable after minor revisions.

Thematic analysis was used to identify patterns and refine shared meanings and themes from the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The first author immersed herself in the interview transcripts, and initially conducted a deductive analysis by developing an *a priori* codebook (e.g., social structure, interpersonal relationship, individual factors, salient identity) based on identity theory and previous literature about UBTEs' identity. The codebook provided initial analytical strategies, which were further tested to see if they were applicable

to the raw data, and then core categories were identified using participants' statements and expressions (e.g., institutional requirements, professional relationship, commitment, teacher-of-teachers, researcher). Then, a data-driven inductive analysis, was used to understand unexpected aspects of the data, generating additional codes and categories. After that, similarities and differences across preliminary (from deductive analysis) and additional (from inductive analysis) categories were continuously compared to cluster similar patterns and refine higher-order themes. Using established themes and coded material in NVivo 12, the responses of UBTEs across university types were compared. To enhance the study's reliability, the co-authors worked collaboratively to clarify and discuss categories and themes at regular meetings, and agreement was reached on each phase.

To understand patterns of identity salience across the study participants, an average composite score of ranking each identity¹ was also calculated (see Footnote 1, Figure 6.1). Additionally, the frequency of the most salient identity across university types was calculated to detect whether there was a distinctive institutional distribution of UBTEs' salient identity (see Figure 6.2).

6.4 Results

This section begins in section 6.4.1 by using the rank scores to establish which aspects

¹ Average composite score = $(\sum \text{frequency} * \text{weight}) / \text{number of participants}$. There were seven identities ranked by participants, with the highest weight (7) to lowest weights (1). For instance, the teacher-of-teachers identity was ranked in the first place 10 times, second place 11 times, third place 1 time, fourth place 1 time, and fifth place 1 time. Thus, the average composite score $\text{teacher-of-teachers identity} = (7*10 + 6*11 + 5*1 + 4*1 + 3*1 + 2*0 + 1*0) / 34 = 4.35$.

of Chinese UBTE professional identity are most salient. Then, sections 6.4.2 (being a researcher) and 6.4.3 (being a teacher-of-teachers) describe the two most salient identities in detail, using data from the interviews to explain why they are salient. In section 6.4.4, four scenarios are presented. These scenarios draw on the interview data to describe how UBTEs in this study resolved the tension between being a researcher and being a teacher-of-teachers in different HEI settings.

6.4.1 Features of Chinese UBTE Salient Identity

Figure 6.1 below shows the average composite score of ranking of each identity. The higher the average composite score, the higher the identity ranking across the whole group. Figure 6.1 shows that “teacher-of-teachers” and “researchers” were dominant identities for Chinese UBTEs, with other identities having much lower average composite scores.

Figure 6.1

Ranking of Identities of Chinese UBTEs

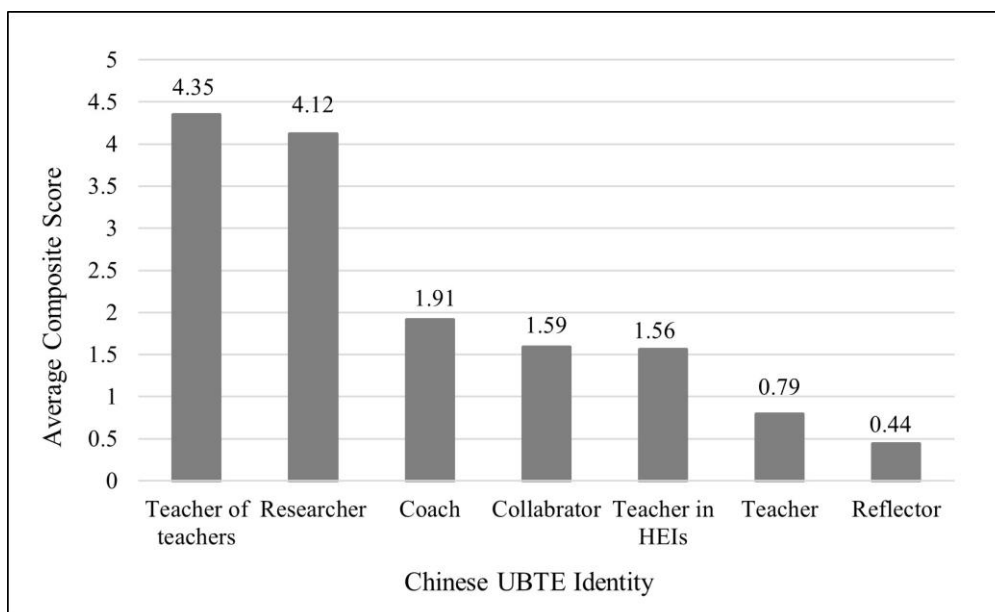
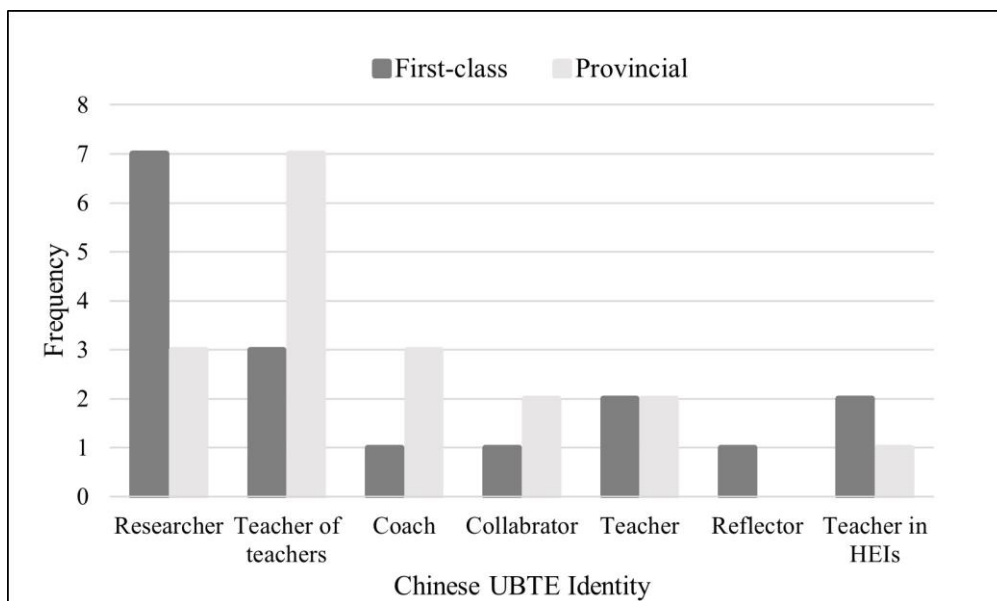


Figure 6.2 below shows that about two-thirds of participants chose “researcher” or

“teacher-of-teachers” as their salient identity. This choice seems to be shaped by university type, with “researcher” more commonly chosen by participants from first-class normal universities and “teacher-of-teachers” more commonly chosen by participants from provincial normal universities. There does not seem to be a pattern among the less common identities.

Figure 6.2

Distribution of Salient Identity of Chinese UBTEs by University Type



6.4.2 Being a Researcher

One-third of participants selected “researcher” as their salient identity. There was agreement across university types that both external factors (e.g., institutional expectations) and internal factors (e.g., curiosity) influenced the salience of the “researcher” identity.

6.4.2.1 Fulfilling Academic Requirements

In both university types, the most common reason for selecting “researcher” was to fulfil academic requirements and expectations, including career promotion (e.g., Chuang, Ting), probationary contract (e.g., Cang), annual assessment (e.g., Tuan), and gaining

reputation (e.g., Tian).

Institutional research expectations bring pressure, particularly for beginner UBTEs. Meeting probationary requirements and getting onto the tenure track shape these UBTEs' view of who they are (e.g., Che, Tang, Tuo). For example, Te prioritised “researcher” identity because of expectations:

I am evaluated every three years under the “publish or perish” pressure. If I complete the work required by the university, I could continue the next three-year contract.

Otherwise, I will lose my work. (Te)

UBTEs also selected “researcher” as their salient identity because they gained the reputation and recognition as a “researcher”. They felt this was how they were seen by others (e.g., Tou, Tiao). To gain respect under a research-oriented evaluation system, UBTEs centred on being research active and enriching research experience and capacity, as explained by Tiao:

The truth is that if you want to apply for grants or external support, your title and educational qualification speak louder than yourself. (Tiao)

6.4.2.2 Following Role Models

Selecting the “researcher” identity is also influenced by role models (e.g., Ce, Chong, Ti). For example, Ce recalled how his supervisor saw ongoing research as central to his teaching:

Teacher A told us that he had nothing to teach students if he stopped studying, which would be irresponsible to students. His experience had a significant impact on me.

(Ce)

Similarly, Tu was inspired by the happiness of his doctoral supervisors when they got published in top journals. This experience conveyed that being a “researcher” is full of meaning and value:

When my supervisors published research in influential journals, they were thrilled to share and discuss them. Their joy of success affected me deeply. (Tu)

6.4.2.3 Achieving Academic Success

Claims to a “researcher” identity were also constructed to satisfy the desire to achieve academic success (e.g., Chong, Cang, Tian, Tang, Tie, Tou). As Chong and Cang said, their ambition to establish themselves in the research field motivated them to identify as “researchers”.

Participants also felt that they were “researchers” because their work benefits national or international academic communities, by leading future research development, enhancing national educational competition, and facilitating international collaboration, as the following quotes indicate:

The current discourse system in education is western-leading. China should first learn, tap western modes, and integrate them with our Chinese styles. (Tian)

I am a facilitator of international dialogues. I always introduce classic literature, discussions, and models abroad to my students and colleagues. I am also happy to generalise the Chinese experience into concepts and then bring them to the international community through publications. (Tou)

“Researcher” identity was not only associated with theoretical contributions, but also with application to practical education issues such as inequity. With research findings increasingly being applied and attracting attention and recognition from society, Tong defined herself as a “very active participant in society” through her research. Tang shared a similar view. His research not only guides the future development of research, but also solves real problems in society.

6.4.2.4 Differences across University Types

A noticeable difference was found in selecting “researcher” identity as most salient between university types, with more in first-class normal universities, and fewer in provincial normal universities. A possible explanation emerged from the data: there seemed to be different motivations for research in the two different university types. For those in provincial normal universities, extrinsic impetus, such as job requirements and demands, forced them to identify themselves as “researchers”. This compulsion was seen as a negative influence on their identity salience. Most mentioned that their “researcher” identity was externally defined, rather than being part of themselves (e.g., Cai, Chuang, Chai, Cui), for example, “Research is my job anyway, and I had to do it well” (Cao), or “I have to do research as a university teacher; nothing special about it” (Ceng).

Forming “researcher” identity also corresponded to a transition from “jiao shu jiang”, an instructor who delivers outdated knowledge, to an expert who informs teaching with the latest research and scholarship, which almost everyone from provincial normal universities indicated (e.g., Cai, Ceng, Chong, Cang). For instance, Chai suggested that the new

technology revolution brings considerable changes in teaching and learning, compelling UBTEs to consume and produce new knowledge and skills to improve pedagogy, which impels “researcher” identity development:

With the advancement of artificial intelligence, the teachers for the future must be reflective or research-oriented. The demand for teachers who teach basic knowledge has decreased. Instead, those who can improve students’ thinking ability and guide them scientifically are popular. As a researcher, I believe that a good UBTE should not only be a “jiao shu jiang” (instructor), but also teach future teachers to do research. (Chai)

At first-class normal universities, “researcher” identity salience was mainly because of intrinsic need, including interests, curiosity, and sense of achievement, although they also faced extrinsic pressure from tenure decisions, annual assessment, and research climate. Many noted the joy and sense of satisfaction they received from conducting research and successful publication (e.g., Tai, Tu, Tou), for example:

Being a teacher educator-researcher is where my curiosity lies. Doing research gives me a great sense of accomplishment. It is reflected in successful publication and a new understanding of what you study. (Ti)

6.4.3 Being a Teacher-of-Teachers

A third of participants selected “teachers-of-teachers” as their most salient identity, influenced by three common factors across both university types: role definition, professional relationships with preservice teachers and schoolteachers, and commitment to their teaching.

6.4.3.1 Obeying Role Definition

In both university types, numerous interviewees described themselves as “teachers-of-teachers”, which originates from their understanding of taking up teacher educator roles. UBTEs’ role is to cultivate the next generation of schoolteachers and benefit school teaching and learning. For many, this role definition was the basis of their identity perception (e.g., Cong, Chuang, Chong, Teng, Ti). Chun explained how she formed a “teacher-of-teachers” identity, saying, “our programme focuses on teacher preparation, and our students are 99.9% likely to be future teachers”. Tian said:

I prefer to tell my friends that I am a teacher-of-teachers because of the nature of my work. I need to guide them [preservice teachers] to be excellent schoolteachers. (Tian)

The “teacher-of-teachers” identity differed from being a teacher of other disciplines in higher education, who concentrate on their teaching and research and care less about their students’ employment and job quality (e.g., Tiao, Ceng, Cai), while UBTEs had the clear goal of preparing teachers:

Academics in other disciplines do their job well, especially the research part, but they do not have cultivation goals as clear as ours [teachers-of-teachers]. They are uncertain about where students will go after graduation, but everything we do is nurture qualified teachers with literacy and essential skills. (Ceng)

6.4.3.2 Establishing Professional Relationships

Interviewees across both university types agreed that positive recognition from preservice teachers enhanced UBTEs’ understanding of their work and gradually established

a sense of professional credibility and achievement as a “teacher-of-teachers” (e.g., Cong, Cao, Tian, Teng, Ti). Cong felt like a “teacher-of-teachers”, particularly when receiving positive feedback from graduates, such as “We all remember what you taught”. Similarly, Teng stated that recognition from preservice teachers motivated him to promote his pedagogy and practice. A typical case, Cao, pointed out that preservice teachers’ development and achievement can, in turn, define UBTEs’ value as “teachers-of-teachers”:

As teachers-of-teachers, we are pleased to see our students achieve good performance and progress in the teaching profession. No matter what you [UBTEs] achieve in research, or the title you have, the only way you can define if you are successful is your students. Even if you are a PhD supervisor, none of your students is willing to go to primary or secondary schools; none gets a teaching excellence award in the county or city. It’s a shame more than sadness, and it means you fail. It is crucial to clarify that what you cultivate is a future teacher. So, our students’ performance and achievement can define our [UBTEs] success. (Cao)

Additionally, a few participants from both university types suggested that their experience in school settings impacted the “teachers-of-teachers” identity salience (e.g., Che, Cui, Teng). Contact with schoolteachers, for these participants, typically resulted in adverse outcomes, such as negative feedback or suspicion. Teng experienced a big shock in in-service training. Schoolteachers did not believe what he said and gave feedback that “You tell me these methods, but you cannot practice them well yourself”. For some, this negative feedback made them determined to bridge the gap between theory and practice and convince

schoolteachers:

Our perception [of teacher-of-teachers] comes from the experience of communicating with frontline teachers. Some schoolteachers do not look up to us; they think we do not know how to practice and only pay lip service, which is a great stimulus to me. We must combine with practice and solve practical problems to adapt to their needs.

(Che)

6.4.3.3 Committing to Teaching and Students

Both groups agreed that committing to teaching and students plays a vital role in shaping the “teachers-of-teachers” identity, which often dates back to their initial motivation to be a teacher educator. Attributes mentioned include a career ideal to be an educator in childhood, a strong passion and love for teaching, and underlining the importance of teacher preparation (e.g., Cen, Te, Tian). Take Cang as an example; his own educational experience shaped his decision to be a UBTE and his identity salience:

I felt very dissatisfied with my educational experience. I want to know what improvements we can make for the future, how our courses can help students, and how our research benefits academic development and practice. I often think about these questions and gradually see myself as a teacher-of-teachers. (Cang)

Love and enthusiasm for teaching and students also made UBTEs inclined to construct themselves as “teachers-of-teachers” (e.g., Cen, Ti, Tai). Ti, for instance, outlined how much she loves to be a teacher and enjoys being with students. Tai admitted that his keenness and interest in teacher education work made him insist on his identity as a “teacher-

of-teachers”.

6.4.3.4 Differences across University Types

Participants from provincial normal universities tended to embrace the “teacher-of-teachers” identity from the beginning of their time working as UBTEs, while participants from first-class normal universities tended to come to this identity over time. For example, five participants from provincial normal universities mentioned professional mission in defining their identity (Cong, Cen, Chun, Chong, Cang), compared with one from a first-class normal university (Tian). In first-class universities, although the understanding of “teacher-of-teachers” image was rooted in preservice education, it was often reading, writing and reflection that led to the adoption of “teacher-of-teachers” as a salient identity by the few who chose it:

It was a socialisation process. What I read, wrote, and did contribute to realising that I participate in teacher education. I have communicated with ideas and literature while teaching and read articles from insightful teacher educators about how they act, which all impacted me. These things slowly penetrated my identity and actions. I gradually gained such an identity as a teacher-of-teachers. (Tou)

Viewing myself as a “teacher-of-teachers” does not happen overnight. One is because I research teacher education; for example, I read literature about teacher education pedagogy, which reminds me. It may also be related to my education experience: I majored in curriculum and pedagogy. This background always allows me to sit down and reflect on my teaching. (Teng)

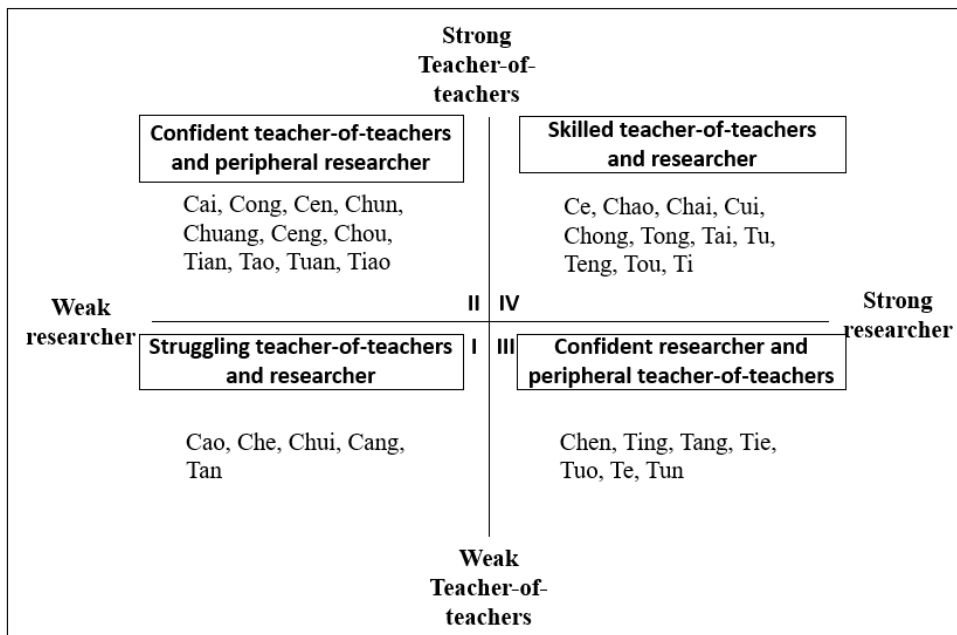
6.4.4 Salient Identity Construction: Four Scenarios

Overall, the thirty-four interviews showed that being a “researcher” and a “teacher-of-teachers” were two central aspects of Chinese UBTEs’ professional identity and work.

Although considering the salience of particular identities showed that UBTEs prioritised some identities over others, a key to success for Chinese UBTEs is balancing both research imperatives and being a teacher-of-teachers. The practice turn demands more practice engagement and credibility from UBTEs; the research imperatives demand more research activity from UBTEs. Considering this tension in light of the interview data, a pattern emerged for individual UBTEs concerning the two key salient identities. For some, one identity dominated, while there was more of a balance for others. This pattern was characterised as an identity being “strong” or “weak” for a particular UBTE, with two axes: vertical (i.e., from weak to strong teacher-of-teachers) and horizontal (i.e., from weak to strong researcher). This led to four scenarios, which are presented in Figure 6.3 below. In the next section, each of these scenarios is explained more fully.

Figure 6.3

Four Scenarios for UBTEs’ Salient Identity



6.4.4.1 A Struggling Teacher-of-Teachers and Researcher

A struggling teacher-of-teachers and researcher type refers to someone having difficulty with both identities. It was a common identity in this data for newly appointed UBTEs at provincial normal universities, who were required to perform according to their probationary contracts. Fulfilling probationary contracts largely depends on their research productivity, yielding enormous research pressure. Due to inadequate experience as schoolteachers, they also need to establish themselves in teaching and adapt to teaching teachers. Consequently, they struggle to be a “researcher” and a “teacher-of-teachers”. Cang was a two-year neophyte UBTE, holding a doctorate from a top normal university. He wanted to be an ideal teacher educator, who is good at connecting theory and practice, but he still had a long journey due to his limited expertise in school teaching.

I do not know how to prepare for a practice-oriented course without any school experience. I feel so awful and stressed each time. My teacher-of-teachers identity is

not particularly mature so far. I am not yet as proficient as I would like to be. (Cang)

Participants also struggled with their “researcher” identity. Because most of Cang’s time was allocated to teaching and administrative work, insufficient and fragmented time was left for research. He perceived this was the obstacle for him to engage in research and successfully form a research identity. Consequently, he was constantly anxious: “I was overwhelmed”, “I did not do anything well enough”, and “Everything was conflicting”.

Moreover, the tension between practice-oriented teacher education research and theory-driven research performance system caused difficulty for UBTEs applying for high-level grants and publishing, which constrained participants’ formation of a “researcher” identity. Che summarised this constraint:

The biggest challenge I face is the contrast between real needs and university expectations. Universities require a high level of research performance. Without such outcomes, individuals will be considered underachievers and are excluded from promotion. However, research on practical teaching cannot be applied for high-level grants, due to the theory-driven educational evaluation system. Research should indeed be integrated with practice, but external requirements constrain us to be close to practice. (Che)

Facing enormous research and teaching demands, novice UBTEs, who have limited K-12 teaching experience and insufficient research support, seem to be struggling to develop a dual identity as a “teacher-of-teachers” and a “researcher”.

6.4.4.2 A Confident Teacher-of-Teachers and Peripheral Researcher

This scenario applies to UBTEs who had established a “teacher-of-teachers” identity with a strong sense of mission but had not become active “researchers”. This scenario was common in participants from provincial normal universities who have been UBTEs for 25 years on average, with strong identification as “teachers-of-teachers”. They prioritised most of their time and effort to preservice teaching and felt responsible to the next generation of teachers, with references to “conscience”, “sacrifice”, and “obligation”. Their teaching brings them credibility, confidence, and a sense of achievement among preservice teachers and colleagues.

However, participants in this scenario experienced research pressure and struggled with the tension between personal expectations to be responsible “teachers-of-teachers” and institutional expectations to be productive in research. These UBTEs kept research peripheral to their identities. Two factors underpinned this decision.

First, insufficient research capacity prevented this group from developing a “researcher” identity. To gain external recognition and financial support from the government, universities emphasised research engagement and productivity, forcing these veteran UBTEs, who graduated with Bachelor’s or Master’s degrees and lacked systematic research experience, to compete with newly-recruited UBTEs holding doctorates. Hence, they were upset to be considered “second-class citizens”, and felt “heartbroken” and “disheartened” that their institutions did not fully recognise their effort in teaching preservice teachers (e.g., Cong, Cen, Chuang).

Another challenge in forming a “researcher” identity was the tension between heavy teaching duties in teacher education and the high-stakes performance appraisal system. Heavy teaching duties, such as teaching, practicum supervision, and teacher professional development programmes, in provincial normal universities, took participants’ time away from research. Cong, for instance, complained that the research-intensive educational evaluation system did not take the nature of teacher education work into account. UBTEs were often “exhausted”, and “overwhelmed” after a long day of teaching and administration. They felt “powerless” and “distracted” from doing research. Even if they conducted practice-oriented research, their results would conflict with the theory-driven performance system and get little credit in the promotion (e.g., Chuang, Ceng, Chou).

In this study, veteran UBTEs in universities that had traditionally focused on teaching had consolidated their identity as “teacher-of-teachers”, and not taken up the “researcher” identity as salient to them or their work.

6.4.4.3 A Confident Researcher and Peripheral Teacher-of-Teachers

UBTEs in this scenario saw themselves as primarily “researchers” and did not see themselves as “teachers-of-teachers”. Their motivation for research and strict research requirements encouraged them to be research-active, at the cost of attention to teaching and students’ development. This pattern was particularly evident for novice UBTEs in first-class normal universities, and two main reasons were identified.

First, it was difficult for neophyte UBTEs in research-intensive universities to dedicate themselves to teacher education work under the accountability culture and appraisal

system. Tuo explained that he only gave teaching a minimum effort, because research would be the way he would be judged. To survive, he had to focus on research. Only when he enters a safe state, such as achieving tenure, could he be comfortable developing other identities and engaging more in student cultivation. Otherwise, “researcher” identity always surpasses “teacher-of-teachers” identity:

New UBTEs cannot talk about the ideal. I was idealistic at the beginning. Yet it was hard, and I quit. Now my most urgent need is survival. (Tuo)

A similar view was shared by Tang, who stated that a result-oriented performance system in higher education encourages her to become ambitious and research-focused. To survive and satisfy assessment requirements, research that will provide credit and rewards becomes her priority, even though she has three conflicting roles to balance: researcher, teacher-of-teachers, and mother.

This results-oriented mode makes it impossible for us to spend much time on teaching and service. I try my best to guarantee my research in my limited working time, which supports my constant development. Sometimes I feel very sorry for my children and students. (Tang)

Moreover, the distinction between theory and practice was a potential threat to identifying as a “teachers-of-teachers”. Most in this scenario had graduated with high degrees and were appointed because of their excellent research records, but they had limited or no school teaching experience before becoming teacher educators. They usually found it difficult to gain credibility from preservice teachers and practitioners, negatively influencing their

“teacher-of-teachers” identity. What troubled them most was that their pedagogy was too theoretical and far from school teaching to convince preservice teachers (e.g., Ting, Te). Te explained that beginning UBTEs graduated from leading universities commonly confronted troubles transforming what they learned into professional practice and teaching practically-oriented courses, so they had little credibility as “teachers-of-teachers”.

Survival is the priority for novice UBTEs in a research-oriented context; receiving the next contract and achieving tenure drive their decisions to focus on research and develop a “researcher” identity. Unfortunately, achieving this requires less commitment to teaching and not forming a “teacher-of-teachers” identity.

6.4.4.4 A Skilled Teacher-of-Teachers and Researcher

Unlike the above scenarios, some UBTEs had found a balance where teaching- and research-related identities were equally important and combined closely, to reach a win-win rather than a conflict (e.g., Chao, Cui, Chong, Teng). These participants successfully balanced “researcher” and “teacher-of-teachers” identities.

Cui was a professor with nine years’ teaching experience in teacher education. With an additional three years’ experience as a schoolteacher, he was familiar with school teaching and teachers’ needs, so he was popular among local schools and schoolteachers. His doctoral experience contributed to his unique perception of his work and identity. These experiences brought him legitimacy to teach preservice and in-service teachers with authentic stories and the latest research results. Cui outlined that research and teaching were highly intertwined. He argued that “without doing research in, with, or from practice, research will be utilitarian,

meaningless, and superficial”, with evidence that his publications were “collaborative outcomes”, mainly from the accumulation and exchange of ideas with students and schoolteachers in his professional practice. His research, in turn, informed teaching and teacher development.

Similarly, Tou was a lecturer in his early thirties with three years’ UBTE experience. Six years of teaching assistant experience had laid a solid basis for his teacher education work and “teacher-of-teachers” identity. As he recalled:

In my first year of PhD, I attended a programme that provided students with practicum guidance. Every week, I took two-hour online classes, watched students’ lesson plans and teaching videos, organised discussions, and gave them oral and written feedback. This process was particularly torturous. I had to spend nearly twenty hours each time preparing for it. At that time, I found self-identification as a teacher-of-teachers. (Tou)

After becoming a formal UBTE, his engagement in research, via self-study – a process to improve pedagogy and reflection, further enhanced his identification as a teacher educator-researcher, and balanced personal expectations to be a good educator and institutional expectations to be a productive researcher:

When working as a UBTE in China, I was already an experienced teacher.

Meanwhile, I conducted self-study, kept reflective logs, and designed research to improve my reflectivity and teaching. My research and practice are closely combined.

I am a teacher educator-researcher. (Tou)

Of eleven participants, most were experienced UBTEs, roughly half from each type of university, and had successfully balanced work demands and their experience to create strong “researcher” and “teacher-of-teachers” identities. This balanced status seems to result from their rich university teaching experience, active engagement in research and reflection, and a clear awareness of intertwining teaching and research in their work.

6.5 Discussion

Through interviews with 34 Chinese UBTEs, this study considers the nature of UBTE professional identity, and what is most important to UBTEs about themselves and their work in teacher education. The two most salient identities found amongst the participants – researcher and teacher-of-teachers – echo the key macro-discourses influencing teacher education in China and globally: research imperative and the practice turn. UBTE salient identities matter because how people conceive of their professional roles shapes the choices they make and what they give their time and effort to. In teacher education, this directly impacts future teachers, and in turn their pupils. The findings of this study suggest that UBTEs with different salient identities do prioritise their work in different ways, which changes the nature of the teacher education they offer.

The main finding was that “teachers-of-teachers” and “researchers” were placed at the top of Chinese UBTE professional identity hierarchy, which confirms previous studies (Czerniawski et al., 2017; Murray & Male, 2005) that teaching and research were two primary roles of being a UBTE. However, these two salient identities were distributed differently across universities: more “teachers-of-teachers” in provincial normal universities

and more “researchers” in first-class normal universities, indicating that workplaces played a key role in forming UBTEs’ identity perception. As identity theory explains, “self reflects society” (Stets & Serpe, 2013): UBTEs learn to act and develop shared meanings (i.e., identities) through socialisation with organisations and policy, climate, and norms. These findings resonate with studies that universities’ positioning, reward system, and teacher preparation goals mattered to UBTEs’ professional practice and self-image. The more organisational culture and policies highlighted research or teaching, the more UBTEs would engage in that work, gradually shaping UBTEs’ self-perceptions as more teachers-of-teachers or researchers (Cao et al., 2019; Liang et al., 2023a).

Apart from institutional factors, contact with previous teachers, preservice teachers, colleagues, and schoolteachers function as determinants of their identities, which confirms previous studies: previous role models (Timmerman, 2009), preservice teachers (Dinkelman, 2011; Griffiths et al., 2014), and colleagues or schoolteachers (Harrison & Mckee, 2010; Murray & Male, 2005), provided expectations and gave meaning to what it means to be a UBTE, strengthened UBTEs’ understandings of their roles, cultivated their professional commitment, and contributed to professional socialisation as teacher-of-teachers or researchers. However, suspicion rather than recognition was commonly experienced by Chinese UBTEs working with schoolteachers, and stimulated participants to fight for their reputation or dignity, which is contrary to the positive feedback received from schoolteachers in prior research in other jurisdictions (Griffiths et al., 2014; Harrison & Mckee, 2010). One explanation is that Chinese UBTEs usually lack practical experience, leading to practitioners’

questioning their ability in practicum and in-service training. Future research could investigate in more depth the impact of relationships between academic-path UBTEs and schoolteachers on UBTEs' professional identity formation.

Although stressing the structural impact of social structure and interpersonal relationships, identity is formed partly by individual factors (Burke & Stets, 2009). This study suggests that UBTEs' career ideals, professional beliefs, and commitment were fundamental to establishing "researcher" and "teacher-of-teachers" identities. UBTEs did not passively accept their roles and identity, but utilised their agency combined with personal preferences and beliefs to do teacher education and be a UBTE. Previous studies also supported the finding that ambitions to accomplish academic achievement, improve personal development, and serve the broader community enabled a researcher identity (Åkerlind, 2008). Commitment to teaching and students initially motivated participants to enter teacher education and prioritised teaching, nourishing their teacher-of-teachers identity (Murray et al., 2011).

The four scenarios discussed in Section 6.4.4 demonstrate both the difficulty of successfully negotiating a balanced identity and the consequences for UBTEs and students of unsuccessful balancing of researcher and teacher-of-teachers identities. Three out of four scenarios describe participants, mainly novice and veteran UBTEs, who struggle with one or both identities. Novice UBTEs usually encountered difficulties learning to establish themselves in teaching and being research-informed, under the competing discourses of practice-oriented teacher education and a research-driven performance system. This tension

caused novice UBTEs, from provincial normal universities, to suffer from ambiguous identity positioning and not know what to do and where to go. Moreover, research pressures nearly overwhelmed the professional lives of novice UBTEs in first-class normal universities, making them eager to survive first by having numerous publications in prestigious journals and trying to avoid engaging deeply with teaching. These issues of the Chinese beginning UBTEs slightly differed from previous studies in other jurisdictions, where practitioner-pathway UBTEs usually comfortably established credibility and legitimacy as a teacher-of-teachers based on their success in school teaching; however, they experienced challenges in research engagement and adapting to the university context and culture (McKeon & Harrison, 2010; Murray & Male, 2005). Chinese veteran UBTEs were in a similar situation to the practitioner-pathway UBTEs: they had plenty of teaching experience and sufficient teaching credibility, but had not engaged in research. The “universitisation” shift highlighted their inadequate research experience and capacity. A lack of institutional support made them reticent about conducting research, leading to marginalised status in academia and not perceiving themselves as researchers. Overall, an unsuccessful balance between research and teaching is manifested in how UBTEs spend their time and effort at the cost of either teaching or research engagement. This affects the message they give to preservice teachers about what is important and the type of teachers they prepare for, in turn influencing the quality of the education system.

A possible way to integrate these two identities, found by this study, is UBTEs’ deliberately aligning their research with their teaching. Participants with balanced identities

had accumulated teaching experience and competence in schools or universities, helping them fulfil teaching and practicum demands and develop an identity as teacher-of-teachers. Meanwhile, they conducted self-studies, reflections, and studies of teacher education practice to make them research active. Teacher education, and the teaching profession, would benefit from UBTEs who can combine researcher and teacher-of-teachers identities because these UBTEs can bring together research findings and methods with a deep understanding of and respect for practice, making them more likely to conduct relevant research and connect with practitioners.

6.5.1 Implications

Given that UBTEs' professional identity is highly related to their work, development, and preservice teachers' professional identity (Izadinia, 2014; McAnulty & Cuenca, 2014), it is necessary to assist UBTEs to be dually qualified in teaching and research.

6.5.1.1 Providing Institutional Support and Challenges

Institutions that want to achieve both connections to practice and research recognition need to carefully consider how they recognise the work of their UBTEs and how the institutions' requirements impact what UBTEs choose to do and how they do it. Making sure that institutional drivers for UBTE work align with institution goals is important. UBTE professional development needs may differ across the career span or because of background and experience; therefore, induction and training programmes should offer personalised support and challenges for target groups (Stes & Van Petegem, 2014). For instance, for novice UBTEs, the risk is that they will not pay much attention to their teaching, or engage

with future teachers. Finding ways to value expertise in teaching, and expertise in developing teaching practice in others is a key consideration for institutions. To the extent that teacher education requires work that other academic disciplines do not, for example, engagement with schools and practicum supervision, this should be accounted for in evaluating UBTEs and for rewards such as tenure or promotion. Veteran UBTEs, with strong ‘teacher-of-teachers’ identities, have different needs. They face increased research pressure, and may need institutional support to build confidence and become productive (Hill & Haigh, 2012). A key to successful amalgamation of both teacher-of-teachers and researcher identities, which seemed to lead to both practice credibility and research outputs, was aligning research interests with UBTE work. Institutions could support such alignment by recognising relevant research projects or creating research groups centred on teacher education.

6.5.1.2 Establishing Communities of Practice

This study also underlines the facilitating role of significant others in teacher-of-teachers and researcher identity construction. UBTEs, in the current study, learned how to be a teacher-of-teachers or a researcher through long-term interactions with their students, colleagues, and schoolteachers, which gradually made them internalise others’ expectations and form a sense of mission and value in their teaching or research-related roles. Thus, improving the frequency of working with significant others and building a good communication and collaboration platform would facilitate good relationships, make up academic-pathway UBTEs’ weaknesses in school practice, make them familiar with school teaching and learning, and eventually form relative identity perceptions. Teacher education

programmes could establish a collegial culture where colleagues can share, cooperate, reflect on teaching and research, and strengthen U-G-S partnerships. These measures might deepen UBTEs' understanding of preservice teachers' needs and expectations, school system, and research development and shape their self-identification as practitioners and researchers.

6.5.1.3 Bring Individual Agency into Play

Personal commitment, 'mission', and emotion played a key role in UBTEs' motivation and identity formation. Paying attention to these aspects of UBTE work and outputs, such as evaluations of teaching or research articles, might help teacher education institutions develop UBTEs who are less stressed and anxious and feel more confident and committed to their work. In addition, there was more of a balance than conflicts in teaching and research-related roles for some UBTEs, showing that personal agency in accumulating teaching experience and engaging in self-study and reflection is a possible way to navigate the teaching-research divide. Thus, UBTEs could be encouraged to use their agency to find ways to intertwine teaching and research in their daily work. Examples of this in the present study were ongoing and deep-level self-study and reflection used to inform professional practice and inspire research ideas, and conducting practitioner inquiry in teaching.

6.5.2 Limitations and Future Directions

While the perceptions of the 34 participants give some insight into the nature and tensions of UBTE professional identity formation, caution is needed when generalising these findings to UBTEs with different backgrounds. Most participants in this study were UBTEs in education rather than subject-based UBTEs, whose identity perceptions are more likely to

be affected by subject identifications (Kastner et al., 2019). Future studies could investigate any difference in salient identity perceptions between these two groups, examine if subject-based UBTEs' subject identifications make a difference to their work and identity, and investigate how their disciplinary expert identity interplays with the teacher-of-teachers and researcher identity. This study focuses on an under-researched group, Chinese UBTEs, who mainly entered the profession from academic pathways, but their experiences cannot be generalised to jurisdictions where practitioner pathways are widespread, and the tensions UBTEs face may differ. Furthermore, this study is a cross-sectional study, meaning that UBTEs' identity perceptions and tensions present their current status, although participants were asked to recall changes in identity. Since identity is changeable, a longitudinal study could illustrate the "turning points" in their identity development better than a one-time interview study design.

6.6 Conclusion

This study has explored how Chinese UBTEs value and mediate key elements of their professional identity and what shapes their salient identity. We found that teacher-of-teachers and researcher identities accounted for the majority of their professional identity. Which of these identities was most salient seemed to be shaped by the type of institution in which they worked, as well as by interpersonal and individual factors. Four scenarios were identified that expressed different relationships between teacher-of-teachers identity and researcher identity. These findings support the description of teacher educators as "Janus-faced" (Smith & Flores,

2019), an expression which describes the tension in teacher education work between teaching obligations and research demands.

Chapter 7 Study Three

The previous two chapters in this thesis have contributed to an understanding of the multiple components of being a Chinese UBTE (study one, Chapter 5), and the salience and challenges for Chinese UBTEs as a teacher-of-teachers and a researcher (study two, Chapter 6). These two studies suggest three levels of influences relevant to shaping UBTEs' identity (studies one and two) – institutional, interpersonal, and individual factors. However, little is known about how these influences work together to affect UBTEs' identities as teachers-of-teachers and researchers, especially as investigated using quantitative research methods (see sections 1.3.2 and 3.3).

This current chapter (Chapter 7, Liang et al., 2023d) works from an assumption that a UBTE identity which balances a teacher-of-teachers and researcher identity will best serve teacher education and, ultimately, learners. UBTEs with a balanced identity could resolve teaching-research conflicts effectively and encourage preservice teachers to excel in both teaching and research. This study addresses the paucity of research with large samples using quantitative analytical methods, to explain how UBTEs could be influenced to form balanced identities rather than “one or the other” identities. The institutional, interpersonal, and individual elements of the model, used in the statistical analysis, were drawn from the previous qualitative studies, to build on those findings and speak back to them. By developing and examining a direct effect moderation model, this study reveals that the relationship between institutional demand, support, and UBTEs' identities as teachers-of-teachers and researchers were mediated by social relationships, and were moderated by

teaching self-efficacy. This finding about the influences of forming a balanced identity could be incorporated into professional development programmes to prepare and support effective UBTEs.

The Antecedents of Identifying as a Teacher-of-Teachers or Researcher Among Chinese University-Based Teacher Educators

Abstract

Teaching and research are central to most university-based teacher educators' (UBTE) work. Studies have identified a conflict for UBTEs in balancing teaching and research, yet little is known about how UBTEs perceive themselves concerning these roles and what factors shape their identity. Integrating teaching and research in a dual identity seems to be a key success for UBTEs. This study, therefore, aims to investigate the influences of forming both teacher-of-teachers and researcher identities by developing and testing a direct effect moderation model. Based on identity theory, our model hypothesises that the effects of institutional demand and support on teacher-of-teachers and researcher identities are mediated by social relationships, while these direct relationships are moderated by teaching and research self-efficacy. Data from 552 Chinese UBTEs partially supported the model, suggesting that developing teacher-of-teachers and researcher identities largely relies on institutional demand, support, social relationships, and teaching self-efficacy. These results help clarify how (i.e., through social relationships) and when (i.e., high teaching self-efficacy) UBTEs perceive themselves as teacher-of-teachers and researcher. These findings could also offer insights for institutions, teacher education programmes, and UBTEs, supporting and preparing effective UBTEs, and thereby improving the quality of future teachers.

Keywords: Teacher-of-teachers; researcher; university-based teacher educators;
institutional demand and support; social relationships; self-efficacy

7.1 Introduction

University-based teacher educators (UBTEs), who contribute to the formal development of preservice and in-service teachers, are central to quality teacher education and to the schooling system (Murray & Male, 2005). UBTEs' professional identity has been found to contribute to their work engagement, professional development (Swennen et al., 2010), and preservice and in-service teachers' professional learning (Loughran, 2014). Forming a professional identity is described as the primary process of becoming a UBTE (Davey, 2013).

Identity refers to a set of internalised meanings attached to people's position in society (Stryker, 2002). Compared with well-defined professions with commonly-held identities, such as schoolteachers or university academics, UBTEs' professional identity is complex and contested (Smith & Flores, 2019) – some parts of their work are like other work in a university, while other parts are not, particularly their work relating to developing new teachers. Becoming a UBTE involves internalising shared meanings of UBTE work and developing a view of self and work that includes these meanings (Stryker, 2002). As UBTE work involves multiple relationships, roles, and responsibilities in teaching, research, and service, UBTEs negotiate diverse meanings attached to different tasks (Stets & Serpe, 2013). Their professional identity is multi-faceted and includes several sub-identities, such as teacher-of-teachers, researcher, and teacher in higher education (Swennen et al., 2010). These facets of UBTE professional identity can be conceptualised as forming a hierarchy: for individuals, some aspects of their identity are more salient than others (Stryker, 2002). Salient

identities are more likely to be triggered in work situations (Stets & Serpe, 2013). Over time, UBTEs can come to see themselves as “more one thing than another” and develop a core identity around elements of professional identity that they most identify with. Revealing which identity UBTEs adopt is important to understand how UBTEs perceive the world of teacher education and use their time and energy. UBTEs with different identities may engage with tasks differently and impact preservice teachers in different ways.

Teaching and research are two roles promoted by universities where UBTEs work. Integrating teaching and research in a “dual identity” is sometimes described as an ideal (Smith & Flores, 2019). Teaching and research can be of reciprocal benefit in teacher education. Teaching about teaching could inspire research with practical issues that need to be addressed; research could produce knowledge about teaching, inform UBTEs’ professional practice, promote their professional development and be used to develop future teachers-as-researchers (Loughran, 2014). However, UBTEs who do not identify with both identities might encounter identity conflicts when they are required to do tasks that do not align with their identities, which might influence their retention, professional development, and the quality of future teachers (Murray & Male, 2005; Yuan, 2016). Further understanding the process of forming a dual identity can help us prepare and support UBTEs to develop dual identities and provide the teacher education that education systems need.

In some jurisdictions, most UBTEs come from school teaching; in others, they follow an academic pathway (Davey, 2013). More is known about UBTEs transitioning from schoolteachers to teacher educators (Davey, 2013; Griffiths et al., 2010), and less about

UBTEs who are doctorally qualified with limited or no school-teaching experience (Newberry, 2014). Some jurisdictions, such as China, have more UBTEs from academic pathways than school teaching (Yuan, 2016). Most studies on UBTE identity are qualitative, providing rich data about UBTE identity perceptions. However, to begin understanding academic-pathway UBTE identity, this study uses quantitative methods to provide a larger scale picture of patterns that can be studied in depth in future qualitative work. In doing so, it uses findings from qualitative studies and from schoolteacher pathways to hypothesise what might make a difference to identity formation as a teacher-of-teachers and a researcher in academic pathway UBTEs. This work also extends UBTE identity research to a less-studied population, with international relevance for other jurisdictions that emphasise academic pathways to teacher education, or those whose policies are shifting teacher education in that direction.

7.2 Literature Review

Inspired by identity theory (Stryker, 2002), this study focuses on three key influences: institutional demand and support, the social relationships UBTEs have, and individual UBTE's self-efficacy in teaching and research. Each of these is backgrounded in the sections that follow.

7.2.1 Institutional Demand and Support and UBTE Identity

Institutional demand describes the organisational expectation about workers' engagement in tasks and workplace (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). This study operationalised demand as organisational requirements about UBTEs' dual roles – teaching and research.

Organisational requirements may affect identity construction (Stryker, 2002) by defining boundaries constraining individuals' actions and interactions with others. If institutional demands are consistent with individuals' identity perception, the salience of their identity perception would be enhanced, and this identity could be invoked across situations. If inconsistent, UBTEs' identity may become mismatched with their work (Stets & Serpe, 2013).

Institutional support is the resources an organisation offers for workers to undertake their tasks and develop their skills (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Individuals with institutional support are likely to engage in their work and establish a strong commitment to their work and associated identity (Stets & Serpe, 2013). A supportive work environment, where participants feel valued and belong, contributes to constructing a teacher-educator identity (Newberry, 2014) or a researcher identity (Yuan, 2016). However, a mismatch between heavy demands and insufficient assistance in time, opportunities, and resources, makes it difficult for UBTEs to build legitimate identities (Hökkä et al., 2012). Based on the above paragraph, we propose:

H1a: Institutional demand is related to UBTEs' identity.

H1b: Institutional support is related to UBTEs' identity.

7.2.2 Social Relationship as a Mediator

Social relationship is "the degree to which people are tied to social networks related to a specific identity" (Stets & Serpe, 2013, p. 36). UBTEs' social relationship in their work usually includes interactions with preservice teachers, schoolteachers, and colleagues. UBTE

identity research has suggested that preservice teachers, schoolteachers, and colleagues' perceptions of UBTEs impact how UBTEs see themselves (Griffiths et al., 2010; Murray & Male, 2005).

Preservice teachers "provide meaning about what it means to be a teacher educator" (Dinkelman 2011, p. 321). If preservice teachers' feedback is positive, UBTEs might feel credible in their professional practice, satisfied with their roles, and gain a sense of value as a teacher-of-teachers (Dinkelman, 2011). Working with schoolteachers impacts UBTE identity (Andreasen et al., 2019). When UBTEs who worked as schoolteachers feel trusted by former colleagues, they will believe their current work is meaningful, giving them legitimacy and visibility as teachers-of-teachers or researchers in higher education contexts (Murray & Male, 2005). Collaborating with colleagues through projects, subject-matter groups, or learning communities help UBTEs feel a sense of community and acceptance, and support them to transition to stronger identities as UBTEs, particularly when institutional support is scarce (Griffiths et al., 2010).

Institutional demand relates to UBTEs' social relationships. According to identity theory, social structure influences social interaction by constraining or facilitating individuals entering or leaving social relationships (Stryker, 2002) or by valuing some relationships more than others (Yuan, 2016). Therefore, UBTEs' interactions with preservice teachers, schoolteachers, or colleagues are likely to be affected by institutional demand. Institutional support also relates to UBTEs' social relationships. When individuals are offered resources to help maintain or strengthen social interactions, they will likely do so (Stets & Cast, 2007).

The more institutional support (e.g., time, funding) in teaching or research, the more likely UBTEs will seek and maintain relationships that tie to an identity as a teacher-of-teachers or researcher. Therefore, we suggest:

H2a: Social relationships mediate the relationship between institutional demand and UBTEs' identity.

H2b: Social relationships mediate the relationship between institutional support and UBTEs' identity.

7.2.3 Self-efficacy as a Moderator

UBTE identity relates to who they are as people; individuals are not passive reactors to external expectations but active actors with agency, freedom, and creativity (Stets & Serpe, 2013). Individuals' independence can be considered self-efficacy, a person's judgement of their capacity to control their environment to achieve goals (Stets & Cast, 2007). Individuals with high self-efficacy can set clear goals, search for resources, and control their behaviours, purposely influencing who they are (Thoits, 2003). Self-efficacy has been found to boost teacher educators' satisfaction and commitment to mentoring roles and identities (Andreasen et al., 2019). Stryker and Vryan (2006) also explain that the influence of social structure on the self may weaken due to personal traits, such as self-efficacy. Thus, self-efficacy could be a moderator strengthening or weakening the link between institutional demand, support, and UBTE identities.

UBTEs, with high self-efficacy, might either actively resist the institutional climate if it does not match their view of themselves, or attempt to balance their beliefs as a UBTE with

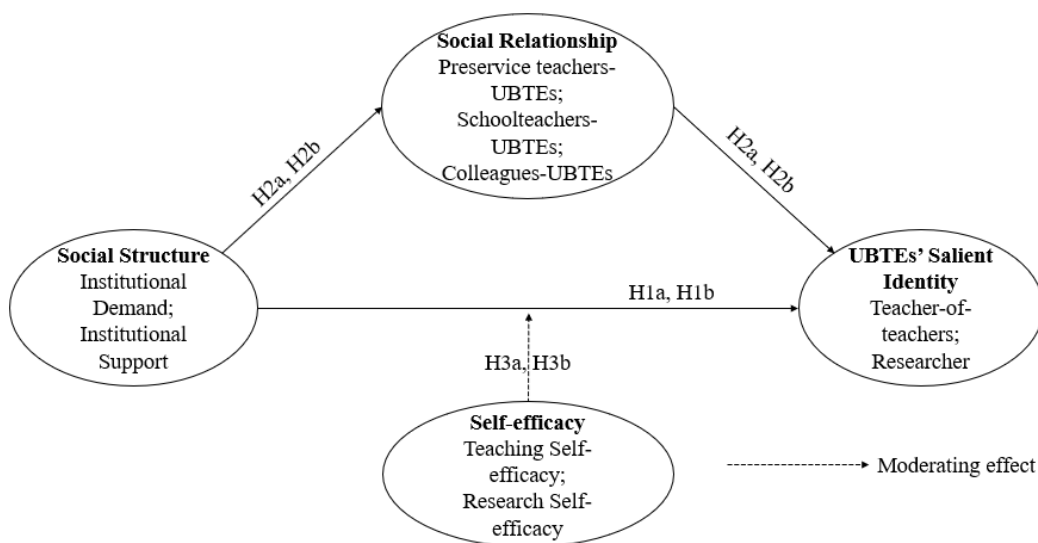
institutional expectations (Hökkä et al., 2012). UBTEs' work and views may be predominantly driven by institutional demands if they feel they cannot make a difference in their workplaces (Murray & Male, 2005). Moreover, institutional support might align with a UBTE's identity, or promote aspects of UBTE work that are not aligned with their identity. How this support is received by UBTE might depend on their self-efficacy. The effect of support is strengthened if individuals use self-efficacy to utilise external assistance to verify their particular identities (Stets & Cast, 2007). Hence, we propose the below hypotheses. Overall, the hypothesised model is presented in Figure 7.1.

H3a: Self-efficacy moderates the relationship between institutional demand and UBTEs' identity.

H3b: Self-efficacy moderates the relationship between institutional support and UBTEs' identity.

Figure 7.1

Hypothesised Model



7.3 Method

7.3.1 Procedure and Participants

With the deans' permission, administrators from Faculties of Education in normal universities (i.e., teacher education-focused institutions) assisted in delivering a web-based survey link through email to potential participants. Participants were informed of the research at the survey link, and indicated their agreement by participating. The survey was anonymous. A total of 650 UBTEs completed the survey. After data screening, ninety-eight questionnaires were removed because of implausible responding times (i.e., less than 2 seconds per item, $n = 27$), repeated responding (i.e., all the same responses, $n = 17$), impossible values (e.g., age below 20, $n = 43$), and non-target participants (i.e., non-UBTEs, $n = 11$), leaving 552 valid responses.

Respondents were from 39 normal universities in mainland China. The distribution of gender (48.2% male, 51.8% female) was relatively even. Most were PhD holders (73.2%), followed by Master (22.3%) and Bachelor (4.5%). Their average experience as a UBTE was 13.0 years, ranging from 3 months to 40.5 years. Lecturers (40.0%) and associate professors (41.8%) comprised most of the sample. Only 21.7% had school-teaching experience. The obtained sample was broadly representative of Chinese UBTEs.

7.3.2 Measures

The questionnaire comprised three parts: background information; identity as a teacher-of-teachers and a researcher; and institutional, interactional, and personal factors. Considering that people often respond positively to survey items about psychological

constructs (Brown, 2004), a 6-point positively packed self-report Likert scale was used, with two negative (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = usually disagree) and four positive response points (3 = slightly agree, 4 = moderately agree, 5 = usually agree, 6 = strongly agree). All scales were translated from English to Chinese following the translation-back translation procedure (Brislin, 1970). A bilingual expert verified the equivalence between the original and translated versions and reached an agreement with researchers on the wording.

7.3.2.1 Identity Salience

Identities as a teacher-of-teachers and a researcher were measured by scales adapted from Callero (1985). Four items, respectively, assessed the extent to which UBTE views themselves as a teacher-of-teachers (e.g., “teaching preservice teachers means more than just teaching”; Cronbach’s alpha was .85), and a researcher (e.g., “Doing research and publishing is something I often think of”; Cronbach’s alpha was .89).

7.3.2.2 Institutional Demand

Institutional demand in teaching and research was measured by scales adapted from Cavanaugh et al. (2000). Three items measured teaching demand (e.g., “Teaching requires teachers to undertake heavy teaching responsibilities”, Cronbach’s alpha = .88) based on modification indices; four items measured research demand (e.g., “Teachers in my university feel pressed for time in research”, Cronbach’s alpha = .92).

7.3.2.3 Institutional Support

Institutional support was measured using four items adapted from Borg (2007), such as “My university provides rich resources (e.g., books, journals)”. Cronbach’s alpha was .90.

7.3.2.4 Social Relationships

Social relationships were measured by relationship commitment scales. It included a 4-item preservice teachers-UBTEs relationship scale (Cronbach's alpha = .93, e.g., "I enjoy being with preservice teachers") adapted from Johnsen et al. (2002), a 4-item schoolteachers-UBTEs relationship scale (Cronbach's alpha = .94, e.g., "Schoolteachers and I trust each other") adapted from Riordan and Shore (1997), and a 3-item colleagues-UBTEs scale (Cronbach's alpha = .85, e.g., "I get along well with my colleagues") adapted from Riordan and Shore (1997).

7.3.2.5 Self-efficacy

Self-efficacy in teaching and research scales were adapted from Lindblom-Ylänne et al. (2006). Four items, respectively, assessed UBTEs' beliefs about their abilities in teaching (e.g., "I am confident that my subject matter knowledge is not a barrier to teaching it well", Cronbach's alpha = .93), and in research (e.g., "I believe that I have necessary abilities to do research", Cronbach's alpha = .92).

7.3.3 Analytical Strategies

Before testing hypotheses, we conducted a missing value analysis and normality test. There were no missing data in this dataset. Multivariate normality assumptions were tested using Mahalanobis distance, with a cut-off p -value of .001 (Tabachnick et al., 2007). A total of 62 outliers were obtained, indicating non-normal data distributions. Thus, the maximum likelihood method with a robust statistic (MLR) that does not assume multivariate normality was used to estimate parameters (Li, 2016).

Once the validity of measures was established by confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), descriptive statistics for relevant variables were conducted. Next, CFA was carried out on the overall measurement model to establish the validity and distinctiveness of the key measures. The model fit was assessed by chi-square, comparative fit index (CFI > .90), Tucker-Lewis index (TLI > .90), root mean squared error of approximation (RMSEA < .08), and standardised root mean squared residual (SRMR < .08) (Fan & Sivo, 2007). Given the impact of workplaces on UBTEs' understanding of measured variables, measurement invariance was conducted to determine if the same constructs were being measured across workplaces. Then, structural equation modelling was used to examine if the hypothesised model fits the data well: the main effect of institutional demand (H1a), support (H1b) on UBTEs' identity as a teacher-of-teachers and a researcher, the mediating effect of social relationships (H2a, H2b), and the moderating effect of self-efficacy (H3a, H3b). Monte Carlo bootstrapping was conducted in R version 4.0.3 with the miccimm package (Cheung, 2021) to obtain 95% confidence intervals (CIs) for mediation effects and moderating effects (5,000,000 repetitions).

7.4 Results

7.4.1 Preliminary Analysis and Measurement Model

Table 7.1 presents the means, standard deviations (SDs), composite reliability (CRs), average variance extracted (AVEs), and correlations. Convergent validity was demonstrated with factors' AVEs above .50 and CRs above .70; discriminant validity was supported as the AVE value of the two constructs was greater than its corresponding squared correlation

(Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Teacher-of-teachers and researcher identities were salient for participants, with means above 4.50 out of 6.00. Teaching demand, research demand, and institutional support positively correlated with both identities, providing preliminary support for H1a and H1b.

Using MLR estimation, an overall measurement model was performed, with good model fit ($\chi^2(620) = 1169.30, p < .05, CFI = .96, TLI = .95, RMSEA = .04, SRMR = .04$). The invariance testing reached a scalar invariant level ($\Delta CFI < .01$, see Appendix B): the instrument was applicable for UBTEs across universities without any response bias.

7.4.2 The Mediating Effect of Social Relationships

To examine whether institutional demand and support affect UBTEs' identity via social relationships, the mediation analysis results are presented in Table 7.2 and Figure 7.2.

Figure 7.2

Relationship Between Institutional Demand and Support on UBTEs' Identities Through Social Relationships as Moderated by Self-efficacy – Unstandardised Significant Path Coefficients

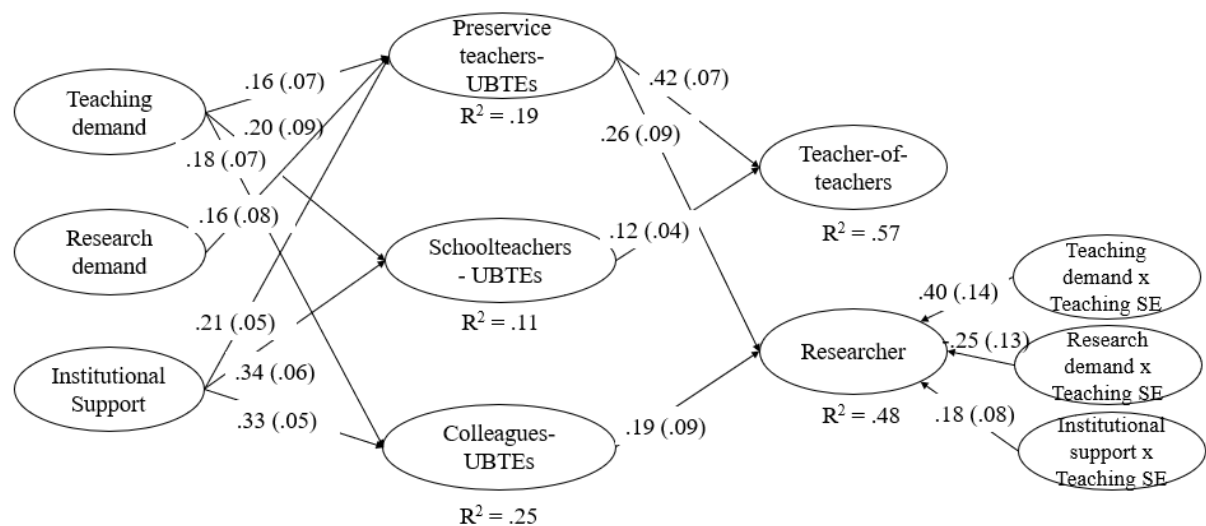


Table 7.1*Descriptive Statistics and Correlation (N = 552).*

Variable	Mean	SD	CR	AVE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1 Teacher-of-teachers	4.56	.64	.86	.61	—									
2 Researcher	4.65	.86	.90	.68	.53***	—								
3 Teaching demand	4.77	.91	.88	.72	.22***	.13**	—							
4 Research demand	4.86	.81	.93	.76	.22***	.16**	.56***	—						
5 Institutional support	4.25	.87	.91	.71	.30***	.27***	.10*	.30***	—					
6 Preservice teachers-UBTEs	4.93	.79	.93	.78	.72***	.46***	.28***	.32***	.30***	—				
7 Schoolteachers-UBTEs	4.23	1.21	.94	.79	.58***	.34***	.16**	.14*	.28***	.61***	—			
8 Colleagues-UBTEs	4.72	.86	.86	.67	.56***	.52***	.26***	.27***	.42***	.64***	.51***	—		
9 Teaching self-efficacy	4.94	.69	.93	.78	.58***	.36***	.22***	.22***	.20***	.60***	.41***	.47***	—	
10 Research self-efficacy	4.81	.74	.92	.75	.41***	.60***	.10*	.22***	.25***	.42***	.32***	.54***	.64***	—

Mean = Observed Mean, SD = Latent s.d., Latent Correlation, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

Table 7.2*Unstandardised Coefficients for the Hypothesised Model.*

	Preservice teachers- UBTEs	Schoolteachers-UBTEs	Colleague- UBTEs	Teacher-of- teachers	Researcher
Independent variables					
Teaching demand	.16* (.07)	.20* (.09)	.18** (.07)	.02 (.05)	.03 (.07)
Research demand	.16* (.08)	-.00 (.10)	.05 (.08)	-.04 (.05)	-.05 (.06)
Institutional support	.21*** (.05)	.34*** (.06)	.33*** (.05)	.06 (.04)	.02 (.05)
Moderators					
Teaching self-efficacy				.29*** (.07)	-.29*** (.08)
Research self-efficacy				-.03 (.06)	.66*** (.08)
Teaching demandxTeaching self-efficacy				.03 (.11)	.40** (.14)
Research demandxTeaching self-efficacy				.10 (.09)	-.25* (.13)
Institutional supportxTeaching self-efficacy				-.10 (.07)	.18* (.08)
Teaching demandxResearch self-efficacy				-.01 (.08)	-.19 (.13)
Research demandxResearch self-efficacy				-.11 (.08)	-.01 (.13)
Institutional supportxResearch self-efficacy				.12 (.07)	-.06 (.08)
Mediators					
Preservice teachers-UBTEs				.42*** (.07)	.26** (.09)
Schoolteachers-UBTEs				.12** (.04)	.00 (.04)
Colleague-UBTEs				.12 (.07)	.19* (.09)
R2	.19*** (.04)	.11*** (.03)	.25*** (.05)	.57*** (.04)	.48*** (.05)

*p < .05, **p < .01 ***p < .001.

As hypothesised, Table 7.2 shows that teaching demand was positively related to preservice teachers-UBTEs ($\beta = .16, p < .05$), schoolteachers-UBTEs ($\beta = .20, p < .05$) and colleagues-UBTEs ($\beta = .18, p < .01$) relationships. Preservice teachers-UBTEs ($\beta = .42, p < .001$) and schoolteachers-UBTEs ($\beta = .12, p < .01$) relationships were positively related to teacher-of-teachers identity. Preservice teachers-UBTEs ($\beta = .26, p < .01$) and colleagues-UBTEs ($\beta = .19, p < .05$) relationships were positively associated with researcher identity. The indirect effects of teaching demand on teacher-of-teachers identity via preservice teachers-UBTEs and schoolteachers-UBTEs relationships were significant, and its indirect effects on researcher identity via preservice teachers-UBTEs and colleagues-UBTEs relationships were significant (see Table 7.3). Moreover, research demand was positively related to preservice teachers-UBTEs relationship ($\beta = .16, p < .05$). Hence, the effects of research demand on both identities via preservice teachers-UBTEs relationships were significant (see Table 7.3). These findings indicate that UBTEs, with teaching demand, are more likely to work with others, through which they claim themselves as teacher-of-teachers or researchers. UBTEs with research demand are more likely to interact with preservice teachers, contributing to both identities. These findings partially supported H2a.

Institutional support was positively related to preservice teachers-UBTEs ($\beta = .21, p < .001$), schoolteachers-UBTEs ($\beta = .34, p < .001$), and colleagues-UBTEs relationships ($\beta = .33, p < .001$) (see Table 7.2). The indirect effects of institutional support on teacher-of-teachers identity via preservice teachers-UBTEs and schoolteachers-UBTEs relationships were significant, and its indirect effect on researcher identity via preservice teachers-UBTEs

and colleagues-UBTEs relationships were significant (see Table 7.3). These results supported H2b, indicating that UBTEs, obtaining institutional support, are likely to develop social interactions with others, making them feel like a teacher-of-teachers and a researcher.

Table 7.3

Indirect Effect of Institutional Demand and Support on UBTEs' Identities via Social Relationships.

Indirect effects	Estimate	p	95% CI
TD→STU→TI	.07	.01	[.02, .12]
TD→SCU→TI	.02	.02	[.01, .05]
TD→CU→TI	.02	.07	[.00, .05]
TD→STU→RI	.04	<.01	[.01, .09]
TD→SCU→RI	.00	.95	[-.01, .02]
TD→CU→RI	.03	.02	[.01, .08]
RD→STU→TI	.07	.04	[.01, .13]
RD→SCU→TI	-.00	.98	[-.02, .02]
RD→CU→TI	.01	.33	[-.01, .03]
RD→STU→RI	.04	.03	[.01, .10]
RD→SCU→RI	.00	.96	[-.01, .01]
RD→CU→RI	.01	.37	[-.01, .05]
IS→STU→TI	.09	<.001	[.05, .13]
IS→SCU→TI	.04	<.01	[.02, .07]

IS→CU→TI	.04	.06	[.00, .08]
IS→STU→RI	.05	<.01	[.03, .09]
IS→SCU→RI	.00	.98	[-.02, .02]
IS→CU→RI	.06	.02	[.02, .12]

Unstandardised indirect effects, TD = teaching demand, RD = research demand, IS = institutional support, STU = preservice teachers-UBTEs, SCU = schoolteachers-UBTEs, CU = colleagues-UBTEs, TI = teacher-of-teachers, RI = researcher.

7.4.3 The Moderating Effect of Self-efficacy

As shown in Table 7.2, the interaction between teaching demand and teaching self-efficacy was positively related to researcher identity ($\beta = .40, p < .01$), while the interaction between research demand and teaching self-efficacy was negatively related to researcher identity ($\beta = -.25, p < .05$), supporting H3a. The interaction between institutional support and teaching self-efficacy was positively related to researcher identity ($\beta = .18, p < .05$), supporting H3b.

Table 7.4 presents the results at three levels of teaching self-efficacy. The association of teaching demand with researcher identity was positive (estimate_{M+1SD} = .33, $p < .01$; LLCI = .13, ULCI = .53) when high teaching self-efficacy was reported; while this relationship was negative when teaching self-efficacy was lower (estimate_{M-1SD} = -.27, $p < .05$; LLCI = -.47, ULCI = -.06). When high teaching self-efficacy was reported, research demand was negatively related to researcher identity (estimate_{M+1SD} = -.23, $p < .05$; LLCI = -.41, ULCI = -.05), but institutional support was positively related to researcher identity (estimate_{M+1SD}

= .15, $p < .05$; LLCI = .02, ULCI = .28).

Table 7.4

Effects of Institutional Demand and Support on Researcher Identity across Levels of Teaching Self-Efficacy.

Levels of teaching self-efficacy	Teaching demand – Researcher identity	Research demand – Researcher identity	Institutional support – Researcher identity
– 1SD	-.27* [-.47, -.06]	.13 [-.06, .33]	-.11 [-.23, .01]
Mean	.03 [-.08, .14]	-.05 [-.15, .06]	.02 [-.06, .10]
+ 1SD	.33** [.13, .53]	-.23* [-.41, -.05]	.15* [.02, .28]

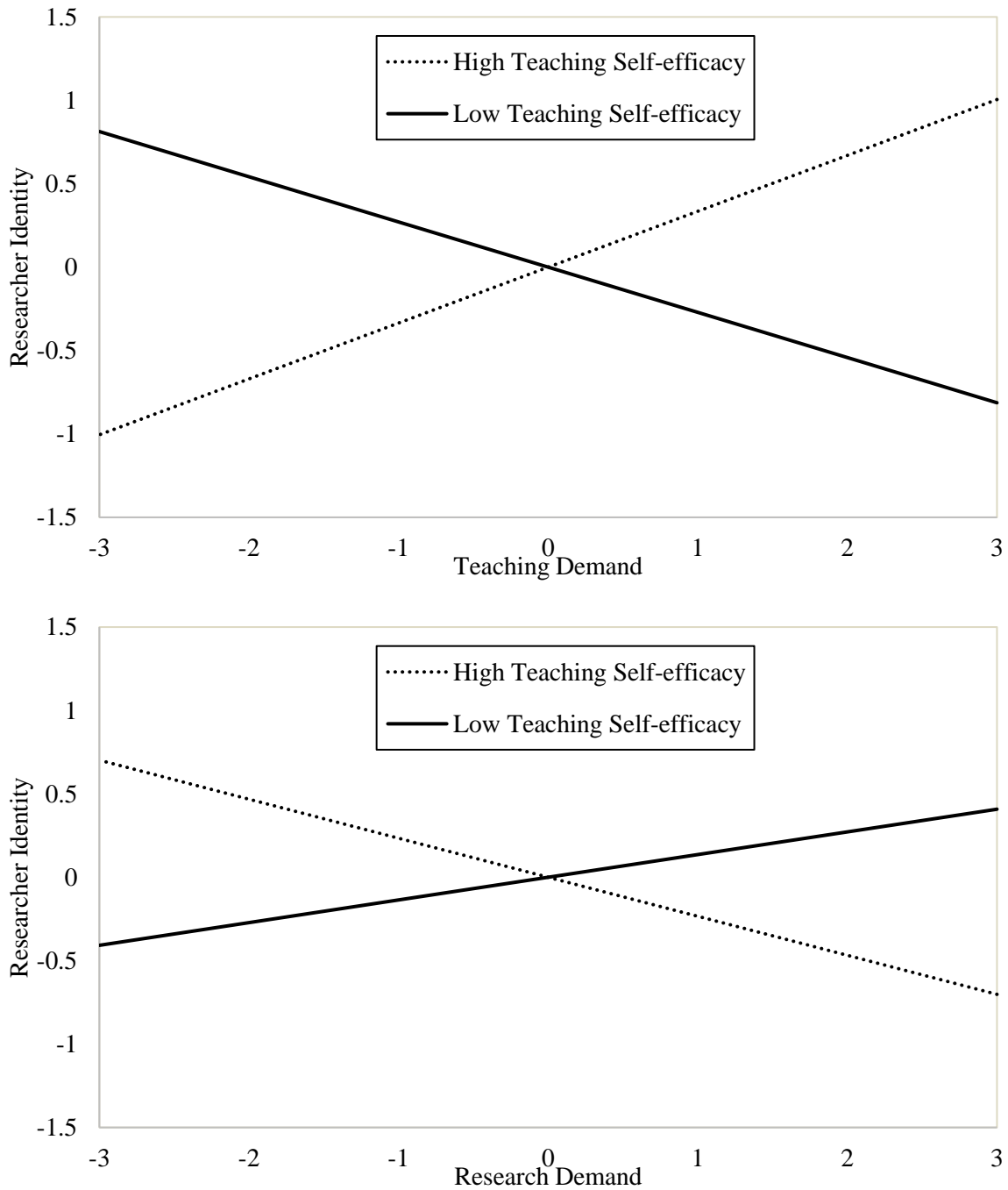
95 percent bias-corrected confidence intervals reported as: [lower limit confidence interval, upper limit confidence interval]. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$.

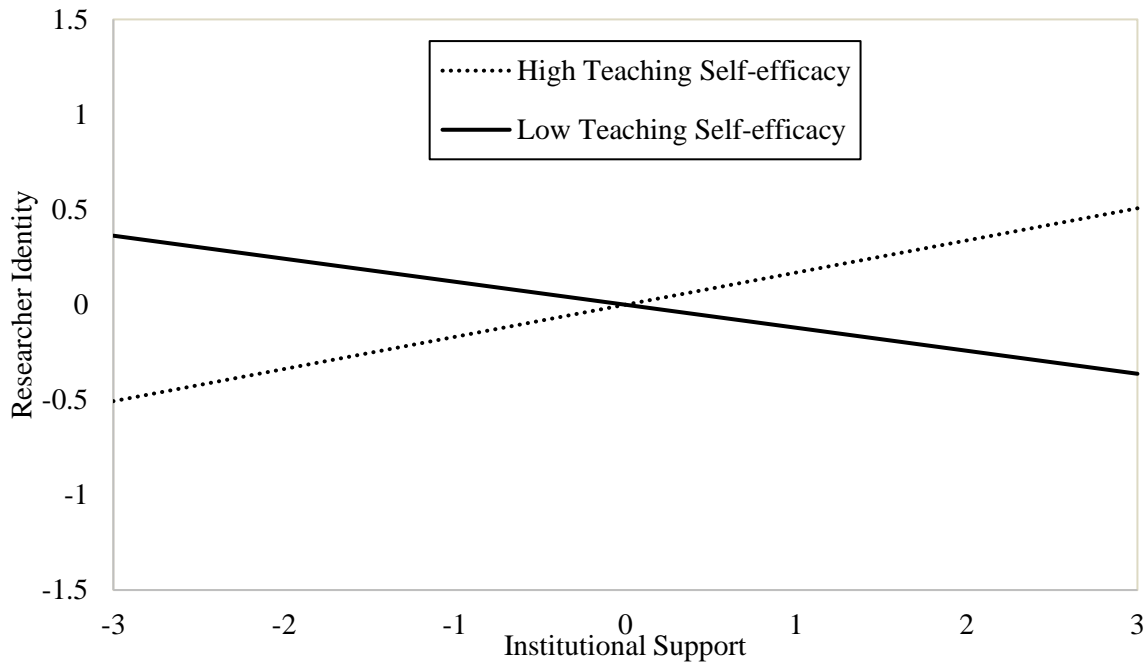
Figure 7.3 shows plots visualising these moderating effects. The first figure indicates that UBTEs can balance the tension between satisfying teaching demand and forming a researcher identity when they believe in their ability to teach well. Otherwise, teaching demand seems to inhibit researcher identity formation. However, in the second figure, UBTEs having high teaching self-efficacy seems to conflict with research requirements, negatively relating to their researcher identity. The final figure shows that UBTEs are more likely to claim researcher identity when they receive institutional support and they believe in

their teaching ability.

Figure 7.3

Plots of Moderated Relationships.





7.5 Discussion and Implications

How UBTEs establish professional identities remains under-researched, particularly in quantitative research. Drawing on identity theory (Stryker, 2002), this study tested how institutional demand and support, the people UBTEs interact with, and individual UBTE's self-efficacy in teaching and research shape their identities as a teacher-of-teachers and a researcher. Both identities were found to be salient for Chinese UBTEs, and to be shaped by both external mandates and expectations, and individual sense of mastery. Implications and limitations are discussed below.

This research extends UBTE identity literature in three aspects. First, it empirically reveals the nature of the professional identity of Chinese UBTEs, who usually follow academic pathways, by finding that both teacher-of-teachers and researcher identities were salient, and the researcher identity was the most salient. One possible interpretation is that Chinese UBTEs often transition from doctoral studies and are mainly prepared for research

(Yuan, 2016). This experience builds their confidence and credibility in research and encourages them to identify themselves more as researchers in their work. Previous studies, however, reveal that it was difficult for practitioner pathway UBTEs to form a researcher identity, as they need transit from schools to universities and then from schoolteacher to researcher (Murray & Male, 2005; Dinkelman et al., 2006). This finding implies the impact of pathways on shaping how UBTEs view and engage in their work. Therefore, future research could investigate to which extent previous findings about practitioner-pathway UBTEs can be applied to academic-pathway UBTEs (Newberry, 2014), and explore the similarities and differences in induction and professional development needs between these two groups.

The second extension develops and tests a model based on identity theory (Stryker, 2002), and discloses the mediating effect of social relationships in transforming institutional demand and support into UBTEs' identity. Institutional expectations and assistance were found to encourage UBTEs to work with preservice teachers, schoolteachers, and colleagues, through which UBTEs gained the meaning of teacher education work and developed teacher-of-teachers or researcher identities. However, the types of social relationships seemed to mediate the association between institutional structure and UBTEs' identities differently. These connections might result from the nature of working with various stakeholders. Specifically, connecting with preservice teachers was found to help convey both teaching and research requirements to UBTEs, which might reflect the hybrid needs in the curriculum and pedagogies of initial teacher education – teach preservice teachers about teaching and teach

them to be a teacher-as-researcher (Loughran, 2014). This hybrid needs further facilitate UBTEs to form both teacher-of-teachers and researcher identities. Interacting with schoolteachers mediated the relationship between the teaching demand and teacher-of-teachers identity. This relationship might be related to the practice-oriented and classroom-based content and activities in partnerships between schools and universities (Williams, 2014). Collaborating with colleagues mediated the relationship between teaching demand and researcher identity. This connection aligned with previous studies that colleagues, particularly seniors, could provide UBTEs with advice, help them develop professional understanding, and bring them confidence as visible researchers (Hökkä et al., 2012). With these quantitative findings, future work could use qualitative methods to explore how UBTEs internalise external expectations and achieve professional socialisation through interacting with others. The potential findings could imply a way to integrate different resources from stakeholders to prepare effective UBTEs who are excellent in practice and theory.

To address a gap in identity theory proposed by Thoits (2003) that the impact of social structure on identity formation is overemphasised, rather than appreciating “the degree to which individuals are active agents in their own lives” (p. 179), this study tests how individual self-efficacy functions in identity formation. First, teaching demand was positively related to researcher identity when UBTEs reported high teaching self-efficacy; this relationship became negative when low teaching self-efficacy was dominant. This connection might be because UBTEs have more time to engage in research and develop a researcher identity, when they believe in their teaching abilities and can therefore get through their work.

Otherwise, intensive teaching loads likely take most of their time, impeding them from research and forming a researcher identity (Griffiths et al., 2010). This finding implies that conflicts between external requirements and identity development could be alleviated if individual self-efficacy is exercised. However, higher self-efficacy does not assume to enhance the legitimacy of related identities, particularly when individual self-efficacy does not align with institutional requirements, as we found that research demand impeded the development of researcher identity when UBTEs reported high self-efficacy in teaching rather than in research. Furthermore, this study reveals that researcher identity was facilitated when institutional support and individual self-efficacy were utilised. This finding confirms that UBTEs with high self-efficacy would fully use resources to resolve challenges and develop their professional identity (Hökkä et al., 2012). However, this study did not find the moderating effect self-efficacy on the relationship between institutional structure and teacher-of-teachers identity. A follow-up qualitative research is needed to understand the underlying reasons, and investigate what matters to UBTEs' teacher-of-teachers identity. It also would be interesting for further work to consider other individual factors (e.g., motivation, resilience) in the relationship between institutional structure and UBTEs' identity.

Although this study achieved a relatively large sample, particularly for UBTEs, limitations should be considered when generalising these findings to other contexts. The measurement of key constructs in this thesis was adapted from existing scales and had acceptable validity, but the adaptation made, with limited items for each variable, and context characteristics, might lead to measurement errors. Thus, researchers should be cautious while

using the instruments of this research and generalising the results into other contexts.

Moreover, a cross-sectional research design employed by this study is commonly used in this field, whereas it, to some extent, neglects testing potential changes in UBTE identity over time. A longitudinal design is needed to reveal the dynamic nature of UBTEs' identity.

Given the reciprocal relationships between teaching and research, this study provides several implications for institutions and programme designers to support UBTEs to develop a balanced identity as a teacher-of-teachers and a researcher. First, institutions should convey clear organisational values, missions, and orientations through contracts, assessments and management policies so that UBTEs better understand their job descriptions and adjust personal goals and time allocations in their work to meet institutional goals. The nature of UBTE work (e.g., intensive teaching, practice-based research) should be valued and given more credits in appraisal systems (Smith & Flores, 2019) to facilitate UBTEs integrating both identities. Additionally, institutional support and others around UBTEs (e.g., time, resources, and mentorship) are important to help UBTEs balance competing tasks and establish identity legitimacy in both roles. Specifically, institutions should build collaborative communities via various activities (e.g., school-university partnerships) to let UBTEs interact with preservice teachers, schoolteachers and colleagues, which could deepen their sense of the meaning in UBTE work. Furthermore, this research provides insights into the role of UBTEs self-efficacy. While institutional forces seem instrumental in shaping UBTE identity, there is a role for UBTE self-efficacy in professional identity development. Through successful experiences as a researcher and a teacher, UBTEs may be able to build a balanced UBTE

identity. Self-study of teacher education is one mechanism for combining teaching and research with UBTE self-efficacy at the centre (Loughran, 2014).

7.6 Conclusion

Balancing teaching and research-related identities is a key success of being a UBTE. This quantitative investigation on potential influences of the development of teacher-of-teachers and research identities illustrates the complex process of being a UBTE. It describes the joint effect of institutional demand and support, various stakeholders in UBTE work, and how individuals exert self-efficacy to achieve personal goals. These findings are beneficial for preparing effective UBTEs and supporting their professional development.

Chapter 8 Discussion

The purpose of the three empirical studies in this thesis is to explore the roles and the professional identity of UBTEs, in the Chinese context, who came to teacher education mainly from academic pathways. Developing UBTE professional identity has been viewed as the central process of becoming a UBTE (Timmerman, 2009), because of the close association between professional identity and professional practice (Lunenberg et al., 2007). How UBTEs perceive themselves in their work might reflect how they view teacher education and influence their choices about what and how to teach. It may further impact the way teacher education programmes function and the quality of future teachers (Davey, 2013; Flores & Day, 2006). However, professional identity is a complex concept because of its multi-faceted and multi-layered nature, and the interdependence of factors that comprise it (Beijaard et al., 2004; Stryker, 2001; Swennen et al., 2010). To understand UBTEs' professional identity raises questions about who UBTEs are, how they perceive themselves, and the differences between a schoolteacher and a teacher educator. How to facilitate UBTE identity development in ways that improve their professional lives and the outcomes of their work also needs to be determined (Izadinia, 2014; Kaasila et al., 2023).

Teacher education has become more of a policy and research focus as questions of teacher quality have become more prevalent (Trippstad et al., 2017). From this work, a deeper understanding of UBTE professional identity is emerging, however, there are three gaps in the literature which are addressed by the current study: 1) the professional identity of UBTEs who did not start their career as schoolteachers (Newberry, 2014; Yuan, 2020); 2) the

ambiguous boundaries and relationships between multiple components of UBTE professional identity (Kaasila et al., 2023; Swennen et al., 2010); and 3) quantitative or mixed methods studies on UBTE professional identity formation to enable research on larger populations for greater generalisation of outcomes (Bain & Gray, 2018; Grobgeld et al., 2016; Pellegrino et al., 2018).

Therefore, the current research conducted a large-scale semi-structured interview and survey study with academic-pathway UBTEs in the Chinese context. There were two overarching research questions: 1) How do Chinese UBTEs, who mainly follow academic pathways into their roles, perceive their professional identity? and 2) Why do they have these identity perceptions? UBTE professional identity was explored in three ways: how UBTEs' identity can be categorised, the relationships between the aspects of UBTE professional identity, and the influences on identity formation, corresponding to three empirical studies that comprise Chapters 5 to 7. This chapter synthesises the findings from the three studies, and then offers a general discussion on how the overall findings connect with the wider literature. Before discussing the implications of this research for UBTE identity research and for teacher education politics and practices, the research limitations of this thesis are discussed. Finally, there is an overall conclusion of the whole research project.

8.1 Summary of Key Findings

This thesis, through three studies, demonstrates that the professional identity of UBTEs in China, where academic pathways are common, includes multiple and competing elements and develops through a complex process. These key findings can be integrated to

answer the two overarching questions: what does UBTE professional identity look like in the Chinese context? And, why do Chinese UBTEs have these identity perceptions?

8.1.1 What UBTE Professional Identity Looks Like in the Chinese Context

The findings from this thesis provide evidence that UBTEs' professional identity could be viewed not just as a holistic concept, but as multi-faceted with multiple sub-identities. Study one (Chapter 5) showed that UBTEs seemed to internalise the meanings of the different roles and demands of their work, including research, teaching, and practicum, into their understanding of who they are as professionals. Therefore, being a UBTE is “more than one thing” in the Chinese context and includes several sub-identities: teacher in a higher education institution, researcher, teacher-of-teachers, collaborator, coach, teacher of tradition, questioner and doctoral student.

Moreover, UBTE professional identity was found to be multi-layered, with different aspects of UBTE professional identity dominant within individuals. Study two (Chapter 6) showed that teacher-of-teachers and researcher were two salient sub-identities for UBTEs. This suggests that UBTEs prioritised the expectations of teaching and research roles in their work and sense-making. Further examination of how teacher-of-teachers and researcher sub-identities play out for the individual UBTE revealed the intertwining and competing nature of UBTE professional identity: being research active often conflicted with being a good teacher-of-teachers; only in a few cases did these two salient sub-identities align. Thus, UBTEs seem to struggle with the research-teaching nexus and view themselves as “more one thing than another” or “two things at once” in their work over time.

8.1.2 Why Chinese UBTEs Have These Identity Perceptions

This thesis next investigated why Chinese UBTEs have these identity perceptions, and considered the complex identity formation process of being a UBTE that links social structure and individuals. The third study explored how identity formation results from the joint effects of external expectations and individual goals.

UBTE professional identity was found to be grounded in requirements from international trends or local culture, their workplaces, and the people with whom they interacted. The jurisdiction in which the teacher education system is located, with its histories, cultures, and teacher educator preparation pathways, was found to shape how UBTEs perceived themselves in study one. Study two found different stories of forming teacher-of-teachers and researcher identities across the two types of normal universities (i.e., first-class normal universities and provincial normal universities). These stories indicated that how UBTEs viewed themselves and gave weight to each sub-identity was influenced by the institutional orientation, positioning, and expectations of where they worked. Study three (Chapter 7) pointed to the importance of balancing both teacher-of-teachers and researcher identities, positing that they had a dual identity. This led to a large-scale survey examining how factors of interest, emerging from the first two studies, shape UBTEs' formation of a dual identity. Results showed that institutional demand and institutional support were positively related to teacher-of-teachers and researcher identities through the mediating role of social relationships. The findings of this thesis all point to the importance of social structures, such as institutions, in contributing to UBTEs' professional identity.

However, individuals played an important role in actively constructing their self-concept. Studies one and two showed that participants' sense of mission and commitment to teaching and students mattered to their teaching effort and to establishing teacher-related identities (e.g., teacher-of-teachers, teacher of tradition), despite pressure to undertake research from their institutions. Study three also found that the effect of institutional demand, and institutional support, on researcher identity varied at different levels of teaching self-efficacy. The above results suggest that UBTE identity was both socially and personally constructed, and UBTEs were active in the process of their identity development.

8.2 Discussion of Key Findings

This thesis explores the nature of UBTE professional identity in the Chinese context, finding that it is multi-faceted (study one) and multi-layered and competing (study two) with an interplay between social and individual factors impacting its development (study three). Specific discussion of the findings from each study has been presented in respective chapters. This section integrates the overall findings from the entire project, interprets and reflects on what these findings mean and how they add value to the teacher education field by speaking to existing literature.

This thesis describes how UBTEs in the Chinese context, who have limited (or no) school teaching experiences, perceive themselves. Chinese UBTEs were found to seldom describe themselves as teacher educators; teacher educator was considered a new term and rarely used in Chinese political, academic, or practical discourses. However, Chinese UBTEs were found to perceive themselves as professionals in various ways, which seemed to reflect

the myriad requirements of their work and comprise a holistic understanding of professional identity. Such findings demonstrate the difficulty of identifying the work of teacher educators and the complex and contested nature of being a UBTE, and confirm previous studies (Lunenberg et al., 2014; Swennen et al., 2010; S. White et al., 2020; Yuan, 2020) that being a UBTE involves various meanings related to the multiplicity of roles, work locations, and stakeholders. This thesis strengthens our understanding of the professional stories of academic pathway UBTEs, who are an under-researched group and are from a distinct political, historical, and cultural context. For example, as illustrated in study one, Chinese UBTEs' understandings and reasons for forming some sub-identities (e.g., researcher, coach) differed from practitioner pathway UBTEs in other jurisdictions (Griffiths et al., 2014; Murray et al., 2011; Williams & Ritter, 2010).

Viewing teacher educators as having similar professional identities can be problematic, as their pathways into teacher education seem to lay the foundations for their development of knowledge, skills, and experience, and are relevant to how they understand and practice their roles. Therefore, given the close relationship between UBTE identity and their work engagement, and reproducing schooling discourses and practices (Murray, 2002), the findings of this thesis could be used in future work to explore the association between UBTE identity and the preservice teachers they prepare. It could also be used to compare UBTE work, identity perceptions, and professional development needs for UBTEs from different pathways, and examine the extent to which previous findings can be applied to academic pathway UBTEs. The results could also facilitate broad dialogue and collaboration

in the teacher education field based on the common elements of being a UBTE across contexts and pathways.

As UBTEs play an important role in developing new generations of teachers, this thesis provides further evidence for what kinds of UBTEs might be effective and ideal. Although the teacher-of-teachers and researchers were found to be the two most salient sub-identities, they were usually in conflict. This finding suggests that Chinese UBTEs encountered tensions between teacher preparation goals and research requirements in their identity formation. Integrating both sub-identities into UBTEs' self-concepts is often considered to be ideal (Cao et al., 2019; Smith & Flores, 2019; White et al., 2020), however, in this study, only a third of UBTEs reported balanced sub-identities. Although these data are from academic pathways UBTEs, this ideal status has been posited by previous studies in other jurisdictions (Cochran-Smith, 2005; Loughran, 2014; Smith & Flores, 2019; Tack et al., 2023) that describe being a UBTE as a "hybrid position" with an expectation of being both excellent in researcher and teacher-of-teachers roles. It appears that the prevailing competing discourses between practice-based teacher education and theory-driven performance systems require UBTEs to be "Janus-faced", that is, facing schools and practice and facing universities and theory (Smith & Flores, 2019; Taylor, 1983; S. White et al., 2020). While some universities address the competing demands of teaching and research by employing either teaching fellows or research fellows, this has been found to be a non-sustainable and short-term strategy and might exacerbate the theory-practice gap (Berg et al., 2016). S. White et al. (2020) have argued that employing and preparing a "hybrid worker", who is excellent in

both areas is necessary. Moreover, UBTEs with a dual identity is increasingly called for in teacher preparation to act as role models for research-informed teaching and of teachers who are not just technicians but “teachers as researchers” (Souto-Manning, 2012).

However, it has been argued, worldwide, that forming a dual identity as a teacher-of-teacher and a researcher is difficult for most UBTEs (Cao et al., 2019; Loughran, 2011; Tack et al., 2023; Yuan, 2020) and can lead to identity conflicts or crises. The findings of this study may help design and implement effective induction and professional development programmes for UBTEs. These programmes should support UBTEs to tackle the teaching-research tension, form a balanced identity, and effectively prepare preservice teachers. Furthermore, the successful attempts (e.g., learning by doing, self-study, and reflection) of Chinese UBTEs in the current research could be worth additional research as routes to developing a balanced UBTE identity.

To further understand UBTEs’ development of a dual identity as a teacher-of-teachers and a researcher, this project attempted to investigate the underlying reasons for UBTE identity formation. Knowing more about this could help researchers and practitioners know how to conduct interventions to address identity challenges and facilitate identity development. This thesis found that who UBTEs think they are was shaped by the workplace in which UBTEs work. This finding echoes previous studies’ findings that institutional policies and management strategies of the workplace in which UBTEs worked, such as rewards, assessment, and promotion, influenced UBTE practice and identity (Cao et al., 2019; Kaasila et al., 2023; Menter, 2011; Yuan, 2016). Context, however, did not completely

determine UBTE identity perceptions as there were consistent elements of being a UBTE, no matter where they worked, for example, moral and ethical dimensions related to preparing the next generation of teachers, pastoral care, and role modelling. This is also the case in research from other jurisdictions (Kaasila et al., 2023). These consistent elements could be a starting point for international dialogue and collaboration on UBTE work and identity to tackle global difficulties of recruitment and retention.

8.3 Limitations

The limitations of this research overall need to be noted before discussing the potential contribution and implications of this thesis. The specific limitations of each study have been discussed in Chapters 5-7.

Although this thesis reported on data from a relatively large group of UBTEs, two main limitations related to the sample should be considered when interpreting the findings. The first limitation is that this research uses mainly the data of UBTEs, teacher educators at higher education institutions, which does not represent all teacher educators, such as school-based or community-based teacher educators, who have different working conditions. Distinctions are found amongst higher education, school and community-based teacher educators in their workplaces (e.g., universities, schools, and communities), roles (e.g., teaching pupils or adults, research), and professional relationships (e.g., student teachers, pupils, parents), there are different requirements on their professional expertise (Goodwin & Kosnik, 2013; S. White, 2019a). Therefore, the nature and formation of their professional identity might reflect these differences. Second, as data were gathered primarily from general

UBTEs in education, these findings may not be generalisable to subject UBTEs; there is limited knowledge of those in specific disciplines, such as maths, literacy, and music. Subject-related sub-identity displays differences in disciplinary logic, ways of thinking, and research paradigms, shown to be more likely to be identified by subject UBTEs than identifying as a teacher-of-teachers or researcher (Kastner et al., 2019; Leavy et al., 2018). Therefore, as backgrounds and contexts matter to UBTEs' work and identity, assumptions of similarities amongst different types of UBTEs should be made with caution.

Furthermore, UBTE professional identity, in this study, was studied with cross-sectional data, it thus represents the current state of UBTEs only at the time data were collected. Given the dynamic nature of professional identity (Amott, 2018; Davey, 2013; Tryggvason, 2012), UBTEs' identity categories might change from single to multiple, and one identity might change from peripheral to salient, as individuals engage in their roles and work which might change over time. Extra caution is needed when interpreting these findings based on cross-sectional data, especially when there are turning points in UBTEs' work. However, a cross-sectional investigation of UBTE identity is still commonly used due to the difficulties in detecting the time points in identity change and in retaining participants during the longitudinal research.

8.4 Implications

The specific implications of the three empirical studies are presented in Chapters 5, 6, and 7, respectively. This section summarises the implications of the entire research project. It is acknowledged that UBTE professional identity is related to the way UBTEs work, how the

teacher education programme functions, and in turn the professional learning and quality of future teachers (Murray & Male, 2005; Yuan, 2019). This thesis, therefore, has important implications for research on UBTE identity, teacher education policy making, teacher education programme design and implementation, and UBTEs' professional development.

8.4.1 For Research

This thesis contributes to UBTE identity research in four ways. First, this thesis contributes to our understanding of the nature and influences of UBTE professional identity in an academic pathway. Because of the emphasis on research outputs in higher education (Yuan, 2016), and “universitisation” reforms in teacher education worldwide, sound research experience and a record of publications increasingly make academic pathway UBTEs stand out in recruitment. Academic pathway UBTEs are more likely to excel in the appraisal system, and gradually become crucial constituents of the UBTE workforce. The focus on academic pathway UBTEs may represent future directions for teacher education research. Therefore, this thesis suggests that researchers could raise awareness of the increasingly active role that academic pathway UBTEs play in teacher education discourses and practice, and conduct further empirical studies to understand their professional lives better, including their professional identity, expertise, practice and professional development. For instance, a collaborative international study could be conducted in contexts in which academic pathway UBTEs predominate as in China, such as Israel, Portugal, North America, or other teacher education systems experiencing reforms towards this trend. This could be similar to a recent international project that aimed to understand the work of teacher educators (WoTE) in higher

education settings across the UK, Australian and New Zealand (Berg et al., 2016; Ellis et al., 2014; Tuinamuana, 2016) contexts in which most UBTEs have formal schoolteaching experience. Through this collaborative study, a common characteristic of the professional identity of academic pathway UBTEs could be identified.

Characteristics of the professional identity of academic pathway UBTEs could be compared with previous studies on practitioner pathway UBTEs, to unpack why different types of UBTEs view and practice differently and to determine how they could be supported effectively based on their similarities and differences. Apart from comparing UBTEs from different pathways (i.e., between-group comparison), future research could also examine the differences within academic pathway UBTEs, who specialise in different disciplines, such as general education, maths, or literacy, as previous studies have suggested that UBTEs' views and practices might be shaped by the subjects they teach (Pellegrino et al., 2018; Meyer & Wood, 2019). As the current study focused mainly on academic pathway UBTEs in education, further studies could examine the extent to which the current findings can be applied to subject-based UBTEs and how disciplines influence their work and identity.

Moreover, professional identity is a complex concept that can be conceptualised in a number of ways. Previous studies usually conceptualise UBTE professional identity as a holistic notion (e.g., Diamond et al., 2021; Murray & Male, 2005; Swennen et al., 2008; Williams & Ritter, 2010) by considering various phenomena (e.g., motivation, expertise, practice) related to being a UBTE in one study. Instead, this thesis provides a perspective by examining the small "units" of UBTEs' professional identity, and how these "units" interact

and comprise the broad-encompassing concept of a UBTE. Informed by identity theory (main ideas from Stryker, 2002), this research focused more on which identity is easily invoked across situations (i.e., identity salience, actual identity) than which identity is important for UBTE themselves (i.e., identity prominence, ideal identity), and more on how social structure shapes UBTE professional identity than the role of individual factors. Although the theoretical framework used for this research matched the questions and methods used, it is important to acknowledge that different ways of conceptualising identity (e.g., holistic versus components, reality versus ideal) could lead to different ways of considering these findings. It would be interesting for future research to extend beyond UBTEs' actual identity, investigate who UBTEs want to be, the tensions between ideal identity and actual identity, and how contextual and individual factors jointly affect UBTE identity.

This thesis, employing a mixed-methods design, also has implications from a methodological perspective. First, as the adaptation of the existing scale for the measurement of identity salience to examine UBTE identity in this study achieved sound validity, it provides a reliable tool for future investigation in this field. Future research could adapt this tool to the local contexts and teacher education programs, and use it to test UBTE identity perceptions in different contexts and compare their results with the Chinese sample as a reference. Second, the combination of qualitative and quantitative methods provides important evidence for examining the applicability of identity theory in teacher education. The qualitative studies first developed empirically grounded identity concepts and influences of identity theory. Then, a large-scale survey integrated these emerged elements and tested

the hypothesised relationships informed by identity theory, which helps capture a larger scale picture of patterns of Chinese UBTEs' identity formation, and extend the qualitative results into a large population or context. To achieve this, this thesis collected self-reported and cross-sectional data about UBTEs' perspectives on their professional identity and its relevant influences. Future studies could collect multiple data sources from stakeholders, such as programme leaders, colleagues, and preservice teachers, to enhance the trustworthiness of the results. However, given the dynamic nature of professional identity (Amott, 2018; Davey, 2013; Tryggvason, 2012), longitudinal research is needed to investigate the significant events, or turning points, to reveal potential changes for UBTEs.

Lastly, this thesis has revealed the close relationship between UBTEs' interaction with preservice teachers and forming UBTE professional identity. It might convey that how UBTEs understand their work and themselves, and which aspect of their professional identity is valued, might be closely related to their behaviours in teacher preparation; UBTEs' views and behaviours in turn impact the learning experience of preservice teachers and their feedback to UBTEs. In other words, the relationship between UBTEs and preservice teachers is reciprocal. Therefore, it will be valuable for researchers to investigate empirically how UBTE professional identity relates to the way they offer curriculum and use pedagogies, how differences in UBTEs identities impact their teaching practice, and the relationships between UBTEs' professional identity and preservice teachers' professional learning and understanding of the teaching profession.

8.4.2 For Policy

Consistent with previous literature (Gong et al., 2021; Ma & Hu, 2018), this thesis has provided empirical evidence that most Chinese UBTEs often describe themselves as university teachers or researchers, and “teacher educator” is still an imported concept for them. The use of terms, such as “teachers who teach education courses” (担任教育类课程的教师, MoE, 2011), “teachers of teacher education course” (教师教育类课程教师, MoE, 2012), or “teachers of curriculum and pedagogy” (学科课程与教学论教师, MoE, 2018), rather than “teacher educator”, in official teacher education policies has likely influenced UBTEs’ identity. It seems that Chinese education policymakers are not fully aware of the differences between being an academic (e.g., teaching) and being a UBTE (e.g., preparing future teachers); and that policymakers have not conceived teacher educator as a unique profession (Smith & Flores, 2019, p. 442). It is recommended that Chinese education policymakers could raise awareness of the importance of UBTE work, and use “teacher educator” in policies to highlight the distinctions between this key profession and other work in universities. In that light, HEIs will be guided to place greater importance on UBTEs groups and teacher preparation, and provide support for UBTEs to balance multiple demands, and UBTEs would feel valued and attach a sense of meaning to their roles.

As participants in this study reported they experienced tension between being research active and being good teachers or teacher educators, Chinese education policymakers could design specific approaches for faculty recruitment, promotion, and professional development for UBTEs that are different to those for general academics. Although “provide preferential

support in professional development, promotion and recruitment” for UBTEs has been mentioned in the policy about *Opinions on Deepening Reform of Construction of Teacher Force in the New Era* (State Council, 2018), more details of these measures are needed.

Possible measures include emphasising teaching experience in recruitment, more credits and time given to teaching-related work, and professional development that includes practice-based or classroom-based aspects of UBTEs’ work.

The lack of professional standards denoting the quality of teacher educators in the Chinese context means that there is little information on knowledge, skills, and experience UBTEs required, their roles and responsibilities, or the support they need for professional development. A lack of information might exacerbate the tension between professional-oriented and academic-oriented discourses in teacher education and UBTE work. It may also explain in part why this thesis found the competing relationships between UBTEs’ multiple sub-identities and UBTEs’ difficulties reconciling teaching and research-related sub-identities. To ensure UBTEs are clear about their duties and roles, so as to work effectively, Chinese education policymakers need to identify, and establish, professional standards for teacher educators. Because similarities between Chinese and international teacher educators have been found in this research, Chinese education policymakers could learn from existing standards from other jurisdictions (e.g., the Netherlands, Koster & Dengerink, 2008) through engaging in dialogues on preparing effective UBTEs with colleagues in other countries. The particular characteristics of being a Chinese UBTE, however, should be taken into account when establishing professional standards. For instance, this thesis shows that Chinese UBTEs

usually transition from doctoral students or academics, which makes them excel in research but might be weak in teaching, and influences their expertise and professional development needs.

8.4.3 For Institutions and Teacher Education Programmes

The findings from this thesis highlight the impact of institutional traditions, cultures, and orientations, in which teacher education programmes are located, on UBTE work and identity perceptions. How institutions value and evaluate the work of UBTEs influences their identity perceptions and work engagement. To avoid ambiguous identity positioning, clear messages about UBTEs' roles and responsibilities, such as recruitment, assessment, promotion, and professional development, could be conveyed to UBTEs through institutional policies and management strategies. Because of the prevalence of competing demands of teaching and research that cause identity conflicts for UBTEs, teacher education programmes could establish a different appraisal system that considers the nature of UBTE work. As well as emphasising research performance, excellence in teaching and developing the scholarship of teaching should be valued and rewarded in the assessment and promotion process (Lai et al., 2014). Chinese UBTEs who have limited K-12 teaching experience need to be supported to familiarise themselves with frontline teaching and learning, improve practice competence, and develop or strengthen their commitment to student teachers.

Placing importance on teaching does not mean that research is not important. However, as teacher education research that focuses on practice and practice-oriented methodologies (Newberry, 2014; Yuan, 2016) receives little credit in assessments of research

performance, in HE contexts, unlike theory-oriented research, some UBTEs' enthusiasm for research engagement and production is diminished. Therefore, programme leaders could recognise the value of practice-based research, through which UBTEs could investigate their own practice, inform their teaching, and establish their legitimacy and credibility as teacher educators. The support could include giving time and credits, and balancing the weight of practice-based and theory-based research performance in the appraisal system. Furthermore, identity conflicts cannot be fundamentally solved if competing instead of consistent requirements still exist in teacher education programmes. To reduce identity conflicts, programme leaders may need to create a work culture that encourages a balance between teaching and research. For example, UBTEs' workload in both tasks should be recognised, and those who integrate teaching and research into their work could be rewarded (Kaasila et al., 2023; Smith & Flores, 2019).

It has been claimed that developing a dual identity, as a teacher-of-teachers and a researcher, is a key to success for UBTEs (Berg et al., 2016; S. White et al., 2020). This needs to include adequate resources, opportunities, policy or financial support to enable UBTEs to construct a balanced identity and prepare them to be effective teacher educators who are qualified in teaching about teaching and doing teacher education-related research.

Appropriate induction and professional development programmes are needed for UBTEs, particularly novice UBTEs, to discuss their multiple work or identity challenges, seek advice from mentors or experienced colleagues, to deepen their professional understanding, to work effectively and form professional identities. Due to the differences in identity perceptions

across pathways, career spans or experience, personalised support and challenge are needed in UBTE professional development programmes. For most participants from academic disciplines, the paramount support is to provide them with practice-based programmes, help them become acquainted with teaching and learning in schools and establish confidence as teacher educators (Newberry, 2014; Stryker, 2001). For someone who has rich experience in teaching but experiences stringent research requirements, research workshops and seminars on research methods and academic writing could help them inform their teaching and practicum supervision (Hill & Haigh, 2012).

This thesis has important implications for teacher education programmes in that the effect of the institution on UBTE identities can be enhanced through engaging in social relationships. Teacher education programmes could create a supportive and collegial environment and build professional communities among UBTEs at different stages. These could include open dialogues, formal learning activities, such as training programmes, group discussions, and conferences, and opportunities for collaboration to strengthen UBTEs' professional abilities, and facilitate professional socialisation and sense of belonging. In addition to teacher education programmes, working with schoolteachers in the "third space" (Zeichner, 2010) has been identified as a way to support the development of UBTEs' identity and help reduce identity conflicts. Therefore, teacher education programmes should establish and implement the university-government-schools model (U-G-S model), to fully use governmental educational services, and encourage UBTEs and schoolteachers to engage in practicum and practice-based research projects collaboratively. These measures could make

up the long-term theory and practice divide and UBTEs' unfamiliarity with the school system (Davey et al., 2011; Griffiths et al., 2010; Hökkä et al., 2012; Williams & Berry, 2016).

8.4.4 For UBTEs

UBTEs have agency and can develop their professional views and actions and develop identities that are not completely determined by external expectations. When experiencing multiple requirements for their work, UBTEs first need to consider the nature of UBTE work, as well as the uniqueness of being a UBTE in contrast to other professions or academics. They need to analyse which part of their professional roles is vital for teacher preparation and their professional development requirements.

Once they have a clear idea of their role in teacher education, UBTEs could bring the individual agency into play, actively balancing external expectations and personal goals, engaging in professional practice, establishing professional relationships with significant others (e.g., students, schoolteachers, and colleagues), and purposefully developing sub-identities. For example, UBTEs could actively connect with schoolteachers and school-based teacher educators through various opportunities and resources, such as research projects, schoolteachers' workshops, and preservice teachers' fieldwork supervision, which could allow them to learn by doing, familiarise themselves with school practice and issues, and finally enhance their professional credibility and legitimacy.

To address the identity conflicts between research requirements and teaching duties, UBTEs need to reflect on and balance their roles as both teacher-of-teachers and researchers. They can also examine their professional practice through self-study or practitioner research,

and make use of external assistance, such as institutional or interpersonal support, so that they could find ways to reconcile both sub-identities into their self-concepts and shift identity crises into potential opportunities for professional development (Newberry, 2014; Yuan, 2020).

8.5 Conclusion

Exploring professional identity is important for understanding UBTEs' professional practice and improving teacher preparation quality (Boyd & Harris, 2010; Murray & Male, 2005; Yuan, 2019). Existing literature has examined UBTE professional identity from a holistic perspective, based on mainly practitioner pathway UBTEs, with qualitative methods (e.g., Diamond et al., 2021; Hayler & Williams, 2018; Murray & Male, 2005). Driven by the importance of exploring UBTE professional identity and addressing research gaps, this thesis emerged from an effort to understand how Chinese UBTEs, who mainly follow academic pathways into their roles, perceive their professional identity and why they have these identity perceptions. Through an exploratory mixed-method research design, this thesis, comprising three empirical studies, provides an in-depth exploration of the nature and formation process of being a UBTE in China. It reveals that UBTE professional identity includes multiple sub-identities organised in a salience hierarchy and intertwining in harmony or conflict. Further, the development of UBTE identity is found to be related to not just individual actions and views, but also to the broad education system nested in society, including social norms, cultures, institutions, and significant others. These findings contribute to the research on UBTE identity by identifying the complexity and challenges of being

Chinese UBTEs who transition from academic pathways, and describing what ideal UBTEs should be like. Furthermore, the outcomes of this thesis provokes researchers and practitioners to be aware of the importance of UBTE work and collectively support the development of their professional identity, so as to prepare effective UBTEs and improve the quality of teacher education programmes.

Appendices

Appendix A: Supplementary Tables for the Systematic Review

Author(s) (Year)	Context & Sample size	Methodology	Individual factors			Interpersonal factors			Contextual factors			UBTE professional identities							
			PB	PP	AM	PA	Co	St	IRE	Sp	NI	Ge	Re	TT	CL	ST	HEI	DE	Le
													(19)	(42)	(31)	(14)	(19)	(16)	(8)
Griffiths, V., Thompson, S., & Hryniewicz, L. (2010)	England: 3 UBTEs and 3 mentors	Case-study		+						±	-		√						
Griffiths, V., Thompson, S., & Hryniewicz, L. (2014).	England: 12 mid-career UBTEs	Case study: In- depth biographical interviews	+	+	+		+	+		-			√	√				√	
Menter, I. (2011).	Scotland: 24 UBTEs	Interviews								=		=		√	√				
Khan, H. K. (2011)	Pakistan: 2 UBTEs	Life history approach										-	+		√	√			√
Robinson, M., & McMillan, W. (2006).	South Africa	Interview			+								=						√
McKeon, F. & Harrison, J. (2010).	England: five beginning UBTEs	Longitudinal case study.	+	+				+					√	√					√

Author(s) (Year)	Context & Sample size	Methodology	Individual factors		Interpersonal factors			Contextual factors				UBTE professional identities							
			PB	PP	A	PA	Co	St	IRE	Sp	NI	Ge	Re	TT	CL	ST	HEI	DE	Le
					M							(19)	(42)	(31)	(14)	(19)	(16)	(8)	(6)
Vloet, K., & Van Swet, J. (2010).	Netherland: 8 UBTEs	A systematic self-study; reflection	+									√							
Yuan, R. (2019)	China: 5 UBTEs and 18 teachers	Focus-group and individual interviews							+		+		√	√					√
Murray, J., & Male, T. (2005)	England: 28 novice UBTEs	Semi-structured individual interviews	+	+			+	+	±	-			√	√		√	√		
Trent, J. (2013)	Hong Kong: 7 beginning UBTEs	In-depth interviews, a narrative approach	+		+	+				=		√				√			
Pereira, F., Lopes, A., & Marta, M. (2015)	Portugal:19 teacher educators (14 UBTEs, 5 SBTEs)	Semi-directive interviews	+										√		√				
Williams, J., & Berry, A. (2016).	Australia: 2 UBTEs	Collaborative self-study					+	±				√							
Snow, J. L., & Martin, S. M. (2014).	USA: 2 UBTEs	Collaborative self-study		+		+				+			√	√	√		√		

Author(s) (Year)	Context & Sample size	Methodology	Individual factors			Interpersonal factors			Contextual factors			UBTE professional identities							
			PB	PP	AM	PA	Co	St	IRE	Sp	NI	Ge	Re	TT	CL	ST	HEI	DE	Le
												(19)	(42)	(31)	(14)	(19)	(16)	(8)	(6)
Williams, J., & Ritter, J. K. (2010)	Australia, USA: 2 beginning UBTE	Self-study		+	+		+	±				√						√	
O'Brien, M., & Furlong, C. (2015)	Ireland: 9 UBTEs	Life history, phenomenological approach; in-depth interviews	+		±				=		+	√	√					√	
MacDonald, A., Cruickshank, V., McCarthy, R., & Reilly, F. (2014).	Australia:4 UBTEs	Critical comparative analysis	-										√					√	
Reynolds, R., Ferguson-Patrick, K., & McCormack, A. (2013)	Australia: 3 UBTEs	Reflective diaries, semi-structured, interviews, surveys					+						√		√				
McAnulty, J., & Cuenca, A. (2014)	USA: 2 UBTEs	Self-study	-									√						√	
Dinkelman, T. (2011)	USA: 1 UBTE	Illustrative case		+	+	+	+	+	-					√					

Author(s) (Year)	Context & Sample size	Methodology	Individual factors			Interpersonal factors			Contextual factors			UBTE professional identities							
			PB	PP	AM	PA	Co	St	IRE	Sp	NI	Ge	Re	TT	CL	ST	HEI	DE	Le
													(19)	(42)	(31)	(14)	(19)	(16)	(8)
Dinkelman, T., Margolis, J., & Sikkenga, K. (2006)	USA: 2 beginning UBTEs	Case study and self-study; semi- structured interviews; field observations; artifacts Narrative inquiry;	+	+					-			√						√	
Sharplin, E. (2011).	Australia: 1 UBTE	autoethnographic research; questionnaire			+				±			√	√		√	√			
Willegems, V., Consuegra, E., Struyven, K., & Engels, N. (2016).	Belgium: 10 UBTEs	Exploratory multiple-case study		+	+								√		√				√
Amott, P. (2018).	UK: 3 UBTEs; 3 teachers	Professional Life History		+								√	√	√		√		√	
Young, J. R., & Erickson, L. B. (2011).	USA: 2 UBTEs	Self-study			+			+	=									√	

Author(s) (Year)	Context & Sample size	Methodology	Individual factors			Interpersonal factors			Contextual factors			UBTE professional identities							
			PB	PP	AM	PA	Co	St	IRE	Sp	NI	Ge (19)	Re (42)	TT (31)	CL (14)	ST (19)	HEI (16)	DE (8)	Le (6)
Hayler, M., & Williams, J. (2018).	UK, Australia: 2 UBTEs	Self-study; personal-history, narrative inquiry method		+									√	√					
North, C., Patton, K., & Coulter, M. (2021)	Ireland, California and New Zealand: 3 PETE academics	Collective self- study						+			√						√		
Harrison, J., & McKeon, F. (2010).	England: 3 UBTES	Longitudinal case- study research: semi-structured interviews	+		+		+	+				√	√	√			√		
Tryggvason, M. T. (2012).	Finland:15 subject UBTEs	Focus group interview	+				+	=				√		√				√	
Davey, R., Ham, V., Gilmore, F., Haines, G., McGrath, A., Morrow, D., & Robinson, R.	NZ: 7 UBTEs	Self-study					+					√	√						

(2011).

Author(s) (Year)	Context & Sample size	Methodology	Individual factors			Interpersonal factors			Contextual factors			UBTE professional identities							
			PB	PP	AM	PA	Co	St	IRE	Sp	NI	Ge	Re	TT	CL	ST	HEI	DE	Le
												(19)	(42)	(31)	(14)	(19)	(16)	(8)	(6)
Weinberg, A. E., Balgopal, M. M., & McMeeking, L. B. S. (2021).	USA: 3 UBTEs	Phenomenological approach; discussion					+						√	√				√	
Meyer, M., & Wood, L. (2019).	South Africa: 1 UBTE	Self-reflective practitioner inquiry			+								√	√				√	
Grobgeld, E., Teichman- Weinberg, A., Wasserman, E., & Barchilon Ben- Av, M. (2016).	Israel: 30 UBTEs, 178 UBTEs in questionnaire	Mixed method							+				√	√	√			√	
Clift, R. T. (2011).	USA: 1 UBTE	Self-study	+						±			√	√					√	
Richards, K. A. R., & Ressler, J. D. (2017)	USA: 1 beginning UBTE	Self-study: journaling, documents, artifacts, exit slips, feedback forms, focus group interviews										√							

Author(s) (Year)	Context & Sample size	Methodology	Individual factors			Interpersonal factors			Contextual factors			UBTE professional identities							
			PB	PP	AM	PA	Co	St	IRE	Sp	NI	Ge	Re	TT	CL	ST	HEI	DE	Le
												(19)	(42)	(31)	(14)	(19)	(16)	(8)	(6)
Newberry, M. (2014).	USA: 1 non- traditional UBTE	Auto-ethnography	±	+				-				√							
McGregor, D., Hooker, B., Wise, D., & Devlin, L. (2010).	UK: 7 UBTEs	Ethnographical approach					+						√	√					
Chang, A., Rak Neugebauer, S., Ellis, A., Ensminger, D., Marie Ryan, A., & Kennedy, A. (2016)	USA: 6 UBTEs	Collaborative self- study					+		+				√	√				√	
Williams, J. (2014).	Australia, The Netherlands, and UK:18 UBTEs	Self-study: semi- structured interviews	+				+								√	√			
Murray, J., Czerniawski, G., & Barber, P. (2011).	England: 20 UBTEs	Case studies	+	+	+				+	±	+		√	√				√	

Author(s) (Year)	Context & Sample size	Methodology	Individual factors			Interpersonal factors			Contextual factors			UBTE professional identities							
			PB	PP	AM	PA	Co	St	IRE	Sp	NI	Ge	Re	TT	CL	ST	HEI	DE	Le
												(19)	(42)	(31)	(14)	(19)	(16)	(8)	(6)
Yamin-Ali, J. (2018).	Trinidad and Tobago: 21 UBTEs	Descriptive intrinsic case study: interview	+		+		-		-	-			√	√				√	
Capello, S. (2020).	USA: 28 Supervisors, two co-directors	Case study: survey, interviews, and document analysis							-	-					√	√			
Pellegrino, K., Conway, C. M., & Millican, J. S. (2018).	USA: 9 interviewee, 124 music UBTEs in survey	Mixed-Methods: interview, survey	+	+	+				+	+			√	√			√		√
Swennen, A., Volman, M., & van Essen, M. (2008).	Dutch: 2 UBTEs	Narrative-biographical research			+	+						√						√	
Smith, K. (2011).	Norway: 2 new UBTEs	Case study, document analysis				+			-	+			√	√				√	
Hökkä, P., Eteläpelto, A., & Rasku-Puttonen, H. (2012).	Finland: 8 UBTEs	Open-ended interviews, research diary				+	±			±	+		√	√					

Author(s) (Year)	Context & Sample size	Methodology	Individual factors			Interpersonal factors			Contextual factors			UBTE professional identities							
			PB	PP	AM	PA	Co	St	IRE	Sp	NI	Ge (19)	Re (42)	TT (31)	CL (14)	ST (19)	HEI (16)	DE (8)	Le (6)
Springbett, O. (2018).	England: 11 UBTEs	Case study: documentation, observation and interview			+				-		-			√					
Bain, Y., & Gray, D. (2018).	Scotland: 61 questionnaire respondents and 11 UBTEs for interview	Mixed method: survey, in-depth interviews				+					-			√	√	√			
Williams, J. (2019).	Australia: 10 UBTEs	Semi structured interviews			+								√	√					
Kastner, J. D., Reese, J., Pellegrino, K., & Russell, H. A. (2019).	USA: 4 music UBTEs	Self-study: interviews and personal journals	±	+				+			-			√		√		√	
Yuan, R. (2017).	Hong Kong: 1 UBTE	Narrative inquiry: interviews		+	+	+	+				-		-	√			√		√
Lunenberg, M., & Hamilton, M. L. (2008).	USA and Netherlands: 2 UBTEs	Self-study	+								=			√	√				

Author(s) (Year)	Context & Sample size	Methodology	Individual factors			Interpersonal factors			Contextual factors			UBTE professional identities								
			PB	PP	AM	PA	Co	St	IRE	Sp	NI	Ge (19)	Re (42)	TT (31)	CL (14)	ST (19)	HEI (16)	DE (8)	Le (6)	
Yuan, R. (2016).	Hong Kong: 2 language UBTEs	Narrative frames, follow-up interview	+	+	+	+	-	+	-	-	-		√	√						
Leavy, A., Hourigan, M., & Ceallaigh, T. Ó. (2018).	Ireland: 3 mathematics UBTEs	Self-study			+		+							√					√	
Lloyd, G. M., de Carle, A., & Coon-Kitt, M. J. (2021).	USA: 3 UBTEs	Collaborative self-study	+	+					=				√	√	√			√		
Klecka, C. L., Donovan, L., Venditti, K. J., & Short, B. (2008).	USA: 14 UBTEs	Electronic portfolios, focus group interviews, individual reflections.	+						=				√	√	√			√		√
Shagrir, L. (2021).	Israel: 1 UBTE	Reflexive research	+	+			+							√						
Liao, W., & Maddamsetti, J. (2019).	USA: 2 UBTEs	Collaborative Autoethnographic Study	±	+		+	+	+		+				√						√

Author(s) (Year)	Context & Sample size	Methodology	Individual factors			Interpersonal factors			Contextual factors			UBTE professional identities							
			PB	PP	AM	PA	Co	St	IRE	Sp	NI	Ge (19)	Re (42)	TT (31)	CL (14)	ST (19)	HEI (16)	DE (8)	Le (6)
Boyd, P., & Harris, K. (2010).	UK:16 UBTEs	Case study: interview, document analysis	+						+				√				√		
Campbell, T., Parr, M., & Richardson, C. (2009)	Canada: 3 UBTEs	Lived experience/history	+	+									√	√					√
Farrell, T. S. (2011).	Canada: 3 language UBTEs	Group meeting		+					+					√	√		√		√
Geursen, J., de Heer, A., Korthagen, F. A., Lunenberg, M., & Zwart, R. (2010).	Dutch: 2 UBTEs	Self-study		+									√	√					
Diamond, F., Wescott, S., & Molloy, K. (2021).	Australia: 3 early career UBTEs	Collaborative narrative inquiry	±									=	√				√		
Bullock, S. M., & Ritter, J. K. (2011).	Canada, USA: 2 beginning UBTEs	Self-study				+				±				√	√				

Note. PB= Personal Biography; PP=Professional Practice; AM=Affective or Motivational factors; PA=Professional Agency; Co=Others; St=Teacher candidates; IRE=Institutional Requirements and Expectations; Sp=Support; NI=National or International policy or reform; Ge=Overall UBTE identity ; Re=Researcher; TT=Teacher of teachers; CL=Collaborator; ST=Schoolteacher; HEI=Teacher in a higher education institution; DE=Disciplinary expert; Le=Leaner; + positive, - negative, ± both positive and negative, = influence but no direction.

Appendix B: Supplementary Table for Study Three

Measurement Invariance Tests of UBTE Professional Identity Scale across University Types

Model	χ^2 (<i>df</i>)	CFI	RMSEA (90% CI)	SRMR	$\Delta\chi^2$ (Δdf)	Δ CFI	Decision
Configural invariance	2312.6 (1240)	.944	.049 (.045 - .052)	.05	-	-	-
Metric invariance	2353.5 (1268)	.944	.048 (.045 - .052)	.05	30.76 (28)	.000	Accept
Scalar invariance	2384.7 (1296)	.943	.048 (.044 - .051)	.05	31.97 (28)	-.001	Accept

Note. $N = 552$; uni-type 1 $n = 124$; uni-type 2 $n = 428$.

Appendix C: The Finalised Interview Protocol

Dear teacher,

Thank you for your participation. This is Jingjing Liang. I am a doctoral student in the Faculty of Education and Social Work at the University of Auckland. This interview aims to understand how you perceive your professional role, the practices you engage in, and relevant factors. It will take you approximately one hour. To better understand your opinions, the interview will be recorded with your consent, which is only used for research and will be confidential. Your participation is completely voluntary. If you feel uncomfortable with any question, you are welcome not to answer or stop at any time.

Mar 2021

1. How did you become a university-based teacher educator (UBTE)? What makes you be a UBTE?
2. How do you understand UBTEs' work? What are the differences between your work and schoolteachers' work/other faculties' work in universities?
3. Specifically, what did you do in relation to your work last week?
4. By doing these tasks, what roles do you think you have played? What professional identities did these roles suggest?
5. How would you do if you were to rank these identities based on how you would introduce yourself to others for the first time, from most likely to least likely?
6. Could you please tell me why you ranked in this way?
7. What are the challenges you have experienced with your work and these identities?
8. Does previous experience influence your work and/or identity?
9. Does your organization influence your work and/or identity?
10. What kinds of UBTE do you want to be? Why?
11. What is your advice to novice UBTEs' role adaptation and work development?

Our interview is over today. Thanks again for your participation!

Appendix D: The Finalised UBTE Professional Identity Survey

Dear teacher,

Thank you for participating in this survey. University-based teacher educators in this survey are faculty members who teach preservice teachers. This questionnaire aims to explore your professional identity, professional practices, and relevant influencing factors. This questionnaire is anonymous and will take around 25 minutes. Your participation will contribute to our understanding of the experiences and identities of UBTEs, potentially providing insights into their professional development. All information will be used for academic research purposes and kept confidential.

Thanks again for your support!

Dec 2021

I am aware that my participation is purely voluntary. I can withdraw participation at any time until the questionnaire has been completed. **I consent to participate in this research:** Yes

I. Background Information

1. Gender: Male Female Other
2. Age: _____years
3. Educational qualification: Bachelor's degree Master's degree PhD
4. Title: Assistant professor Lecturer Associate professor Professor
5. Subject taught: _____
6. Length of service as a UBTE: _____years
7. Have you had K-12 teaching experience (full-time): Yes, _____year(s) No

II. Thinking about your teaching and research this academic year, please answer according to your actual situation

1 = Never, 2 = Seldom, 3 = Occasionally, 4 = Sometimes, 5 = Often, 6 = Very often

1. I teach professional courses for preservice teachers	1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

2. I supervise preservice teachers' thesis or research						
3. I engage in practicum with professional guidance and emotional support						
4. I participate in and coordinate university-school (kindergarten) partnership						
5. I read the latest academic articles or books						
6. I attend seminars or research conferences						
7. I write and publish research findings in the form of articles or books						
8. I write and apply for a research grant						

III. The following statements relate to your confidence in teaching and research.

1 = strongly disagree, 2 = usually disagree, 3 = slightly agree, 4 = moderately agree, 5 = usually agree, 6 = strongly agree

1. I am confident that my subject matter knowledge is not a barrier to teaching it well	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. I believe that my pedagogical knowledge and skills can support preservice teachers in developing professionally						
3. I believe that preservice teachers can learn well from my teaching						
4. I am confident that I can manage to practice good modelling for preservice teachers						
5. I believe that I have necessary abilities to do research (e.g., sampling, data collection and analysis)						
6. I am certain that I can effectively search for literature						
7. I am certain that I can generate researchable questions and appropriate research design						
8. I am confident about presenting my research effectively (e.g., manuscripts, books, conference papers)						

IV. The following statements relate to your perceptions as a teacher-of-teachers and a researcher.

1. I have clear feelings about being a role model for preservice teachers	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. I would feel lost if I were forced to give up teaching preservice teachers						

3. Teaching preservice teachers how to teach is of great significance to me						
4. For me, teaching preservice teachers means more than just teaching						
5. Doing research and publishing is something I often think of						
6. If I were forced to give up doing research, I would feel lost						
7. For me, being a researcher means more than just doing research						
8. Doing research is an important part of who I am						

V. The following statements relate to your interaction with significant others.

1. I often interact professionally with preservice teachers (e.g., academic supervision, practicum supervision, classroom teaching)	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. I establish rapport with preservice teachers						
3. I enjoy being with preservice teachers						
4. Preservice teachers and I trust each other						
5. I often interact professionally with schoolteachers (e.g., research projects, practicum collaboration, teacher training)						
6. I am pleased to keep in contact with schools and schoolteachers						
7. I build harmonious and collaborative relationships with schools and schoolteachers						
8. Schoolteachers and I trust each other						
9. I often interact professionally with colleagues (e.g., academic cooperation, teaching sharing)						
10. I am willing to share professional ideas and information with my colleagues						
11. I get along well with my colleagues						

VI. The following statements relate to your institutional climate.

1. Teachers in my university need to complete a large number of teaching tasks	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. Teaching work requires teachers to undertake heavy teaching responsibilities						
3. Teachers in my university often feel pressed for time in teaching						

4. My university sets high standards for academic performance (e.g., appointment, annual assessment, promotion)						
5. Teachers in my university need to complete a large number of research tasks						
6. Research work requires teachers to undertake heavy research responsibilities						
7. Teachers in my university often feel pressed for time in research						
8. My university provides rich resources (e.g., books, journals) for teachers						
9. My university offers teachers rich support (e.g., a mentor or group assistance, research conferences, visit study) in their work						
10. My university gives teachers opportunities to learn (e.g., observe colleagues' teaching, and the latest research)						
11. My university encourages teachers to teach well and engage in research						

Appendix E: Participant Information Sheet



**EDUCATION AND
SOCIAL WORK**

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

For Faculty Dean

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Research Project: A Study of Role Expectation, Role Perception and Role Behaviour of

Chinese University-based Teacher Educators

Researchers: Jingjing Liang, Dr. Fiona Ell, Dr. Kane Meissel

The goal of this research is to explore the current situation of the professional role and practice of university-based teacher educators (UBTEs) and relevant influencing factors. The result of the project will provide us empirical evidence of the nature of Chinese UBTEs' work in research-intensive environments, and provide insights for policymakers and organizational leaders, so as to improve the development of UBTEs and the quality of teacher education in the Chinese context. This project includes a 60-minute online semi-structured interview and a 30 minutes web-based survey.

Your participation is purely voluntary. You can let your Faculty withdraw this research at any time without any reason, and/or withdraw the data of your Faculty up to seven days after participants receive the transcript (for interview session) and/or before the completion of the questionnaire (for survey session). But the data collected from individual teachers who have consented to participate in this project cannot be withdrawn.

Each UBTE's participation in your institution is purely voluntary, and they may decline this invitation. In the interview session, even if UBTEs choose to participate, they can stop and leave the interview. If UBTEs would like to join in the interview, please contact Jingjing Liang by email (jlja568@aucklanduni.ac.nz) to arrange an interview time. To thank each UBTE's time and support, their postal addresses will be collected voluntarily to get a \$20 (or equivalent) gift (e.g., a research method book or a souvenir from New Zealand) at the

end of the interview. In the survey session, they can participate voluntarily, and give up submitting the questionnaire at any time without any reason. They can also withdraw the participation at any time until the questionnaire has been completed. If participants would like to participate in the survey, they can click the questionnaire link in the invitation email.

You are requested for permission to:

1. Allow the researcher to conduct research in your Faculty.
2. Allow the researcher to ask for assistance from the administration office to recruit potential participants to participate in the research project; Allow the researcher to send the invitation letter with the electronic Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form (for interview session) for UBTEs to the administrator through email. Then the administrator will send the documents through email to the UBTEs.
3. Allow the researcher to approach consenting UBTEs presenting the aim, rationale, and design of the study.
4. Give your assurance that teachers' participation or non-participation will not affect teachers' relationship or employment at your institution.
5. Allow the researcher to administer a 60-minute online semi-structured interview with consenting UBTEs to investigate the current situation and influencing factors of role and practice of UBTEs.
6. Allow the researcher to administer a 30-minute web-based survey with consenting UBTEs to investigate 1) socio-demographic characteristics, 2) role perception, 3) role behaviour, 4) internal and external role expectations and personal characteristics.

In the interview session, the interview will be recorded by the researcher. Note, the audio recording can be stopped at any time if UBTEs ask the researcher to cease. They are able to withdraw the interview without any reason, and/or withdraw all their interview data for up to seven days after they receive the transcript by contacting Jingjing via email (jia568@aucklanduni.ac.nz). The audio recordings will be transcribed by the researcher within 30 days after the interview. If UBTEs would like, the transcript will be sent to each

UBTE. They will have one week to make changes. In the survey session, information provided will be anonymous in web-based questionnaires.

Only the researchers will have access to the UBTEs' responses. Responses will not be identifiable to any third party. The findings from this research will be used for student researcher's PhD thesis, and in further academic publication and/or presentation. However, there will be no name, reference, or any identifying information of the participants and institutions used in any publication.

The interviews and any hard-copy consent forms will be stored separately and securely in a locked cupboard in the office. The web-based survey questionnaires will be stored securely on a password-protected computer at the University of Auckland. After a period of six years, all participants' data will be shredded or deleted, and only collated data in a de-identified spreadsheet will be retained for analysis and publishing purposes.

If you consent to conduct the research, please read and sign the Consent Form (for the interview since the survey is anonymous) attached to this Participant Information Sheet and email it back to Jingjing (email: jlia568@aucklanduni.ac.nz). I appreciate your consideration in accepting my request.

If you have any further queries about this research, please do not hesitate to contact:

- **Student researchers** Jingjing Liang (email: jlia568@aucklanduni.ac.nz)
- **Associate professor** Fiona Ell (email: f.ell@auckland.ac.nz)
- **Senior lecturer** Kane Meissel (email: k.meissel@auckland.ac.nz)
- **Head of School** Richard Hamilton (rj.hamilton@auckland.ac.nz, 09 923 5619)

For any queries regarding ethical concerns you may contact the Chair, University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee, Ethics and Integrity Team, University of Auckland, Private Bag 92019, Auckland 1142. Telephone 09 373-7599 ext. 83711. Email: humanethics@auckland.ac.nz

Approved by the UNIVERSITY of AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE on 09/12/2020 for three years. Reference Number UAHPEC3473.



**EDUCATION AND
SOCIAL WORK**

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET
For University-based Teacher Educators

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Research Project: A Study of Role Expectation, Role Perception and Role Behaviour of Chinese University-based Teacher Educators

Researchers: Jingjing Liang, Dr. Fiona Ell, Dr. Kane Meissel

I would like to invite you to participate in this research project if you are

- 1) Chinese university-based teacher educator working in a research-intensive higher education institution, who are
- 2) specialized in curriculum education, curriculum and pedagogy education, or pedagogy education (i.e., early childhood education, teacher education, primary and/or secondary education, special education)
- 3) and dually-qualified teacher educators who supervise preservice teachers in practicum, and also conduct research related to teacher education

The goal of this research is to explore the current situation of the professional role and practice of university-based teacher educators (UBTEs) and relevant influencing factors. The result of the project will provide us empirical evidence of the nature of Chinese UBTEs' work in research-intensive environments, and provide insights for policymakers and organizational leaders, so as to improve the development of UBTEs and the quality of teacher education in the Chinese context. This project includes a 60-minute online semi-structured interview and a 30-minute web-based survey.

Your participation is purely voluntary and you may decline this invitation. In the interview session, even if you choose to participate, you can stop and leave the interview. If

you would like to join in the interview, please contact Jingjing Liang by email (jlia568@aucklanduni.ac.nz) to arrange an interview. To thank your time and support, your postal addresses will be collected voluntarily to get a \$20 (or equivalent) gift (e.g., a research method book or a souvenir from New Zealand) at the end of the interview. In the survey session, you can participate voluntarily and give up submitting the questionnaire at any time without any reason. You can also withdraw the participation at any time until the questionnaire has been completed. If you would like to participate in the survey, please click the questionnaire link in the invitation email.

The interview will be recorded by the researcher. Note, the audio recording can be stopped at any time if you ask the researcher to cease. You can withdraw the interview without any reason, and/or withdraw all your interview data for up to seven days after you receive the transcript by contacting Jingjing via email (jlia568@aucklanduni.ac.nz). The audio recordings will be transcribed by the researcher within 30 days after the interview. If you would like, the transcript will be sent to you. You will have one week to make changes. In the survey session, the information provided will be anonymous in questionnaires.

Only the researchers will have access to your responses. Responses will not be identifiable to any third party. The findings from this research will be used for the student researcher's Ph.D. thesis, and in further academic publication and/or presentation. However, there will be no name, reference, or identifying information of the participants and institutions used in any publication.

The interviews and any hard-copy consent forms will be stored separately and securely in a locked cupboard in the office. The web-based survey questionnaires will be stored securely on a password-protected computer at the University of Auckland. After six years, all your data will be shredded or deleted, and only collated data in a de-identified spreadsheet will be retained for analysis and publishing purposes.

You are assured by the Faculty of Dean that your participation or non-participation will not affect teachers' relationship with or employment at your institution. If you consent to

join the interview, please read and sign the Consent Form attached to this Participant Information Sheet and email it back to me. If you agree to join the survey, please read and click the Consent button in the web-based questionnaire link. I appreciate your consideration in accepting my request.

If you have any further queries about this research, please do not hesitate to contact:

- **Student researchers** Jingjing Liang (email: jlia568@aucklanduni.ac.nz)
- **Associate professor** Fiona Ell (email: f.ell@auckland.ac.nz)
- **Senior lecturer** Kane Meissel (email: k.meissel@auckland.ac.nz)
- **Head of School**, Richard Hamilton (rj.hamilton@auckland.ac.nz, 09 923 5619)

For any queries regarding ethical concerns you may contact the Chair, University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee, Ethics and Integrity Team, University of Auckland, Private Bag 92019, Auckland 1142. Telephone 09 373-7599 ext. 83711. Email: humanethics@auckland.ac.nz

Approved by the UNIVERSITY of AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE on 09/12/2020 for three years. Reference Number UAHPEC3473.

Appendix F: Consent Form



**EDUCATION AND
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CONSENT FORM FOR DEAN

THIS CONSENT FORM WILL BE KEPT FOR 6 YEARS

Research Project: A Study of Role Expectation, Role Perception and Role Behaviour of Chinese University-based Teacher Educators

Researchers: Jingjing Liang, Dr. Fiona Ell, Dr. Kane Meissel

I have read the Participant Information Sheet, and I understand the nature of this research project. I have been given an adequate opportunity to make queries and have them responded to my satisfaction.

- I allow the researchers to invite university-based teacher educators (UBTEs) in my institution to participate in the research project.
- I allow the researchers to approach UBTEs presenting the aim, rationale, and design of the study and invite them to engage in the research.
- I give my assurance that the teacher's participation or non-participation will not affect the teachers' relationship or employment in my institution.
- I understand that the research task involves an online interview for approximately 60 minutes with UBTEs who consent to participate in the research.
- I understand that participants will be audio recorded in the interview session and that these audio recordings and the transcripts are confidential. I understand that even if UBTEs agree to be recorded, they may choose to have the recorder turned off at any time.
- I understand that UBTEs are free to withdraw the interview data for up to seven days after receiving the transcript.

- I understand that the data collected will be used to communicate to audiences through academic publications and/or presentations. Personal information will not be identified in any way.
- I understand that the data provided, including the hard-copy, audios, and other electronic data, will be stored securely on the researcher's password-protected University of Auckland computer, and will be destroyed after six years.

Please write your name, sign and date below if you consent to participate in this research.

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

**Approved by the UNIVERSITY of AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS
ETHICS COMMITTEE on 09/12/2020 for three years. Reference Number
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CONSENT FORM FOR TEACHER EDUCATORS

THIS CONSENT FORM WILL BE KEPT FOR 6 YEARS

Research Project: A Study of Role Expectation, Role Perception and Role Behaviour of Chinese University-based Teacher Educators

Researchers: Jingjing Liang, Dr. Fiona Ell, Dr. Kane Meissel

I have read the Participant Information Sheet and I understand the nature of this research project. I have been given an adequate opportunity to make queries and have them responded to my satisfaction.

- I understand the Faculty of Dean has given an assurance that my participation or non-participation will not affect my relationship with or employment at my institution.
- I understand that the research task involves an online interview for approximately 60 minutes.
- I understand that participants will be audio recorded in the interview session and that these audio recordings and the transcripts are confidential. I understand that even if I agree to be recorded, I may choose to have the recorder turned off at any time.
- I understand that I am free to withdraw the participation relating to my interview for up to seven days after I receive the transcript.
- I understand that the data collected will be used to communicate to audiences through academic publications and/or presentations. Personal information will not be identified in any way.

- I understand that the data provided, including the hard-copy, audios, and other electronic data, will be stored securely on the researchers' password-protected University of Auckland computer and will be destroyed after six years.
- I **wish/ do not wish** (*please circle one*) to review my interview transcripts. I understand that the audio recording of my interview, and/or any hand-written notes will be transcribed by the researcher within 30 days of the interview. I understand that any edits must be made within one week of receipt of the transcript.
- I **wish/do not wish** (*please circle one*) to receive a summary of the findings, which can be emailed to _____.

Please write your name, sign and date below if you consent to participate in this research.

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

**Approved by the UNIVERSITY of AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS
ETHICS COMMITTEE on 09/12/2020 for three years. Reference Number
UAHPEC3473.**

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