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# Professional identity formation in intercultural education: a study of preservice teachers in Oman

[Journal for Multicultural Education](#) • Article • 2026 • DOI: 10.1108/JME-07-2025-0142 [Alabri, Khalaf Marhoun](#)<sup>a</sup> ; [Amzat, Ismail Hussein](#)<sup>b</sup> ; [Emam, Mahmoud Mohamed](#)<sup>c</sup> <sup>a</sup> Department of Educational Foundations and Administration, College of Education, Sultan Qaboos University, Al-Khodh, Oman[Show all information](#)

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## Abstract

**Purpose** – This study aims to investigate the formation of teacher professional identity (TPI) among preservice teachers in Oman from an intercultural perspective and explores how cultural and institutional contexts shape identity factors. **Design/methodology/approach** – Using a four-factor model (Fisherman and Abbot, 1998), TPI was assessed across four factors: confidence about teaching, self-actualisation, teaching as a mission and recognition of professional challenges. Data collected from 1,080 preservice teachers in six higher education institutions were subjected to structural equation modelling and confirmatory factor analysis. **Findings** – The four-factor structure was supported (CFI = 0.949; RMSEA = 0.076). Confidence about teaching and self-actualisation were most strongly associated with TPI, indicating high perceived competence and personal growth. Teaching

as a mission and recognition of challenges were less strongly endorsed, suggesting limited civic engagement and awareness of systemic demands. Multivariate analysis showed statistically significant differences in identity factors by GPA only, with no significant variation by gender or reasons for entering the profession. Practical implications – The findings suggest the need for reforms in teacher education that promote intercultural competence, critical reflection and identity-informed practicum design to better prepare teachers for diverse classrooms. Originality/value – This study contributes to research on intercultural teacher education by situating identity analysis in the sociocultural realities of the Arab Gulf. It highlights how preservice teachers negotiate identity within linguistic, regional and institutional diversity. © 2026 Emerald Publishing Limited

Author keywords

Identity development; Intercultural education; Oman; Preservice teachers; SEM; Teacher professional identity

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