Teaching Reform in Higher Normal Universities: A Research Based on Quality-oriented Education

Xiao-jing WU and Chia-Hung WANG
College of Information Science and Engineering, Fujian University of Technology, Fuzhou City, Fujian Province 350118, China

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Abstract. As the main force for national teachers’ cultivation, higher normal universities shoulder the task of cultivating qualified teachers for all levels of schools. Their teaching level will not only affect the quality of teachers’ cultivation and the full implementation of quality-oriented education, but also plays an important role in the accomplishment of all-round development concept ultimately. Therefore, based on the teaching reform in higher normal universities under the background of quality-oriented education, this research aims to figure out some improvements to promote the quality of teaching and training for teachers with high quality requirements of the new era comprehensively. In this paper, the author illustrates that strengthening teachers’ profession as cultivation goal, and comprehensive schooling as the direction, higher normal universities should demand their teachers to focus on improving the quality of classroom teaching, pay attention to fostering students' ability of practice, adopt various different teaching methods, promote the formation of a variety of learning methods.

Introduction

CI HAI, the traditional authoritative Chinese dictionary said that quality refers to people or things with characteristics in some aspects and the original basis. According to the typical interpretation on special quality in psychology, quality refers to the innate physiological features of humans, and mainly about the characteristics of sensory organs and nervous system. It is the physiological condition for psychological development, but cannot determine the psychological content and the level of human development.

According to pedagogic concept, the generalized quality is defined as the intrinsic, relatively stable, physical and mental characteristics and basic structure with long-term effect, which was acquired by human beings through education and training based on the innate physiological and environmental factors. It mainly includes human's moral quality, intellectual quality, physical quality, aesthetic quality, quality of labor skills and so on.

In Several Opinions on Actively Promoting Quality-oriented Education in Primary and Secondary Schools, the Ministry of Education in China expounded the meaning of quality-oriented education and made a clear explanation as follows: The purpose of quality-oriented education is to improve the national quality. Based on the national education Law and policy, quality-oriented education focuses on the requirements of long-term development for the educated and the whole society. Its fundamental purpose is to comprehensively improve the basic quality of students, cultivate their attitudes and abilities, and ultimately promote their vivid, lively and active development in the fields of morality, intelligence and other aspects as their basic characteristic.

Quality-oriented education mainly includes both the intrinsic and external quality. The intrinsic quality is mainly about people's world outlook, outlook on life, values, moral values, which is closely connected to the world, the environment, views and significance of life. It is also the views towards people, things, objects, and can be described as people's state of mind. The external quality refers to people's ability, behavior, achievement and so on. Quality-oriented education lays a solid foundation for the educated to achieve the continuous optimization of their quality. Meanwhile, it helps them
construct a sound scientific quality structure and promote an all-round, harmonious and balanced development for the educated.

From the perspective of education, the purpose of quality-oriented education is to cultivate and improve the overall quality of the educated. Emphasized on the cultivation for students' innovation spirit and practical ability, quality-oriented education aims to implement qualified citizens with all-round development of morality, intelligence, physical, and aesthetic education.

From the function of education, quality-oriented education is the basis of the need of human and social development. Its fundamental purpose is to improve the basic quality of all students. Respecting the students' subjective position and initiative, quality-oriented education pays attention to the formation of students’ healthy personality and recognizes it as the basic characteristics.

From the perspective of historical development, the requirements of the quality of the educated in different times are constantly changing and improving with the development of society. Stressing the spirit of innovation and practical ability, paying attention to and promoting the all-round development of the educated are the soul, core and goal of quality-oriented education.

Generally speaking, quality-oriented education being pushed forward in China is not only a profound revolution in the field of education, but also an innovation and progress in the personnel training mode.

Raising Teachers' Comprehensive Quality

Advocating quality-oriented education is the major task for current education reform in China. The key to school education is how to improve the overall quality of students. Teachers are required not only to teach the knowledge, but also to guide and educate the students' ideological and moral quality. To some extent, teachers' quality will play a crucial role in the decision whether the quality-oriented education is successful or not. In other words, teachers' quality will determine the quality of education directly. Without qualified teachers, there is no quality education afterwards. Considering the fact that teachers are the main force and the key factors to determine the success in teaching reform, the author firmly thinks that in the concrete teaching practice, the training for teachers’ overall quality in higher normal universities can be comprehensively promoted from the following three aspects:

Changing the Traditional Teaching Concept

Teacher's teaching concept determines the direction and result of his teaching behaviors and has a significant impact on the overall quality of the educated. Quality-oriented education requires changing the implementation of the curriculum in traditional teaching process which emphasizes too much on the status of receptive learning, rote memorization and mechanical training. It also indicates that during the teaching process, students should obtain not only the ability of acquiring new knowledge proactively, analyzing and solving problems, but also the ability of communication and cooperation. Therefore, promoting their ability of autonomic learning, researching, innovating, practising is definitely the necessary requirement to implement the comprehensive improvement of the overall quality for quality-oriented education. Quality-oriented education considers teaching process as a positive, teacher-student interaction which can help them develop together. The teaching concept of quality-oriented education reflects the nature of the teaching process scientifically and comprehensively. It indicates that teaching process should cultivate and form students' active and diverse learning methods and innovative thinking skills. It requires to transform the teacher-centered learning community to a teacher-student interaction, so as to promote the all-round development of students. Therefore, according to quality-oriented education, teachers in higher normal universities are required to change their traditional teaching concept, establish the student-centered teaching thought, transform themselves from the preacher of knowledge, the dominant subject of instruction to the leader, collaborator and organizer of students.
Cultivating High-Quality Teachers

In accordance with quality-oriented education, teachers’ professional quality should be improved from two aspects: firstly, broaden teachers’ professional horizons and comprehensively optimize the professional quality structure system for teachers. In order to meet the needs of high quality personnel training required by quality-oriented education, teachers in higher normal universities should have a wide range of basic professional knowledge and application of information technology, such as wide range of knowledge, permeation of liberal arts and sciences, interdisciplinary studies and the integration of curriculum structure. Secondly, teachers should have a good professional quality of pedagogical knowledge. From the view of professional development, teachers’ professional quality of pedagogical knowledge determines their cultivation and teaching achievements, which determines the quality of students and the level of teaching. In this sense, teachers’ professional quality of pedagogical knowledge is the core point for their professional development.

Improving the Quality of Classroom Teaching

Teachers’ innovative ability determines their academic level and the level of teaching. As the basis of high quality teaching, teachers’ innovative ability deepens and promotes the teaching reform profoundly. Therefore, paying attention to the cultivation of teachers’ innovative ability and spirit is of great significance to improve teachers’ overall quality and promote the quality of classroom teaching in normal universities, which can ultimately promote the all-round development of students effectively.

Reforming the Teaching Connotation

As the key link in the teaching reform of higher normal universities, the reform of teaching contents should emphasize on the characteristics of teachers’ cultivation in normal universities, on the teaching plan revising and curriculum adjustment, and adapt to the needs of basic curriculum reform.

Changing Teaching Contents

It is necessary to enhance the normality of specialty courses, the academic and practical teaching of pedagogical courses, and optimize the curriculum structure. The theoretical knowledge of students' education, the application knowledge of modern educational information technology and the training of educational practical ability should be strengthened to promote the rapid improvement of students' professional quality. On the choice of curriculum contents, universities should not only pay attention to the integration of the normality and academic contents of teaching, but also promote the combination of application and theory of teaching contents through the intersection of the arts and sciences, the integration of disciplines and the application of information technology practical courses. All these requirements can help universities achieve the optimal combination of course structure, provide students with the needs of the times in line with the curriculum and teaching contents and finally promote the overall quality of students.

Reforming Teaching Methods and Transforming the Ways of Learning

Teaching methods and students’ ways of learning affect the efficiency of classroom teaching and teaching quality directly. Quality-oriented education requires to fully respect students' subjectivity during teaching process, and to cultivate their ability of initiative learning and life-long learning. From the process of students' thinking development, the individual's thinking level is the premise and result of learning. It is said that creative thinking is the highest form of individual learning, while the traditional learning concept prefer to pursue memory and knowledge in some external, passive and inculcate ways. The result will inevitably affect the effectiveness of classroom teaching and the development of students' thinking level. Therefore, student's experience and cognitive structure must be followed in teaching activities organization. In accordance with individual’s aptitude, teachers should promote heuristic teaching, and constantly reflect on their own teaching practice.
Changing the Concept of Evaluation

Teachers’ evaluation for students will directly affect the effectiveness of classroom teaching. The theory of multiple intelligences holds that mankind’s thinking and understanding of the world are diverse. Man’s intelligent structure is pluralistic, and each type of intelligences plays an important role both in human's understanding and transformation of the world. It is one-sided and unscientific to evaluate students or investigate the effect of school education solely by the standardized pen-test. The consequence of this traditional evaluation is that many of the major potentialities of students are not identified and developed. Therefore, avoiding using a single evaluation method, student evaluation should lay special emphasis on evaluating their practical ability and creativity in solving problems. In addition, from the perspective of students’ individual development, quality-oriented education not only requires students to master the necessary knowledge for their life-long development, but pay more attention to the development of their ability of practice and innovation as well. Teachers from normal universities should respect the differences among students and reform the current concept of student evaluation. In other words, we advocate to establish a pluralistic comprehensive evaluation which combines the evaluation of students’ comprehensive quality with academic achievement assessment and practical ability of solving problems. This evaluation will promote students’ development and improve the function of teaching.

Conclusion

How to improve the quality of classroom teaching is the core issue of teaching reform in higher normal universities. Through the above elaboration, the author insists that higher normal universities should emphasize the infiltration and the integration of multiple subjects, should link theory with practice, promoting the integration of the academic and strengthen the research on the theory and practice of basic education curriculum reform. Teachers should increase the proportion of teaching hours in educational theory and practice and highlight the status of practical courses of modern educational information technology application and the cultivation of students' educational practice ability. On the other hand, teachers are required to adopt the flexible and various teaching methods in order to promote students to form the initiative and diverse learning methods. To summarize, with the aim of strengthening teachers’ specialty, higher normal universities must not only unswervingly adhere to the basic concept of training high-quality teachers, emphasize the direction and policy of comprehensive school running, but also carry out educational science research constantly, promote the overall improvement of teaching quality and ultimately achieve the era requirements for high-quality teachers’ training.

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References


