Reason Analysis and Solution Proposing for the Lack of Motivation among College Students

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Abstract: Some students of our colleges and universities at this stage are not enthusiastic about learning and their learning attitude is not correct, which has aroused due attention among higher education institutes, families and the society. With the problem getting worse, a direct impact on the overall quality of college graduates has been resulted. Therefore, it is of much value to analyze the reasons for the weariness of students toward their study and to explore practical measures to foster interest on student learning so that their learning interest and ability could be fostered and their awareness of innovation could be improved.

Reasons for the Weariness of Students toward their Study

Unsmooth Transition between High School and College Education

Students are overtired under the examination-oriented education in high school which is in conflict with the aim of quality education. After being admitted to college, they could finally relax themselves after the fierce pressure of college entrance exam. This relaxation could find its way into the weariness of students toward their study and the loss of their purpose of study. To a large extent, this arises from inadequate scientific education management, lack of correct outlook for life in high school. Students have difficulty adapting to the role change in quality and innovative thinking. The difficult transition between high school and college education is becoming continually apparent after the beginning of college education.

Exam-oriented education puts too much emphasis on score and ignores innovation

Although the Ministry of Education has been emphasizing the quality of education and the reduction of academic burden on students, over the years the advocate is not fully implemented mainly because some elementary and middle schools teachers and parents lack of a clear understanding of education, thinking that the more time students spend on study, the better their performance could become. As a matter of fact, neither too much nor too little time spent could lead to desirable output. Many schools, teachers and students put curricular tasks on extra-curricular schedules. Quite a number of schools arrange additional schedules on holidays and even festivals. This on the one hand could lead to the heavy burden on students and on the other hand the weariness of students towards their study. Only with the support of teachers and supervision of parents could the learning effect in high school be achieved. Many research have illustrated that additional teaching arrangement may not improve the academic performance of students and additional teaching arrangement could not necessarily lead to higher scores of students. Parents and students should be persuaded that the requirement of the Ministry of Education is reasonable, the suggestions of education experts are correct. Extra-curricular teaching arrangement and teachers taking this could only result the high profit of some.

Some students don’t like their majors

Roughly half college students in China do not like their majors because their choices were made by their parents. They only come to know their majors after coming to college. Another case is that some students have chosen their favorite majors but not enrolled because of their comparatively low scores. In this case, they might be admitted to another major of the university they have chosen.
Some universities lack features for their majors, the teaching faculty is not qualified enough and they are not equipped with adequate advanced teaching instruments. Still some universities fail to do sufficient market research for the demands of their majors or arrange their majors only according to their teaching faculty rather than according to the demand of the society. Interest is the best teacher. There could be no attraction for majors that one does not enjoy. It would be rather difficult to adhere to their study for a long time without personal interest. Therefore it is not hard to understand that many students choose to skip classes and become weary of their study.

Large enrollment of undergraduates leads to severe pressure of employment.

According to the data from the Ministry of Education, the number of college graduates has been on the rise: the number of college graduates in 2007 is 4.95 million and the number has risen to 6.99 million in 2013 and an alarming 7.27 million in 2014. It is expected that the number could reach 7.5 million in 2015, which could only lead to a more severe pressure of employment among college graduates. The Ministry of Education has lately issue a notice on better promoting the employment work for college graduates in 2015. It is pointed out in the notice that employment work for college graduates in 2015 is under multiple pressure. With an increasingly larger number of college graduates, employment and entrepreneurship will be even more difficult. The employment and entrepreneurship of college graduates is an important livelihood project in the field of education, which has already arouse the attention of the central government, requiring further strengthening the service system for college graduates. It is also clearly required the establishment of service system for college graduates employment and the improvement of the proportion of employment and entrepreneurship for college graduates.

What makes it hard to understand is the interference of the great pressure of employment on the motivation and enthusiasm. This pressure, on the other hand, worsens the weariness of students toward their study, especially this feeling in the second-class and third-class universities in China. According to relevant surveys and investigations, it is found that the employment rate upon graduation for these universities is rather low. As is maintained by some students, no difference could be found between those who study hard or not, neither could the difference be found between those who excel or not. Under this condition, it is hard to guarantee the teaching quality and English teachers could find no way out. Much of the teachers’ effort is spent on keeping the class in order. Most students do not do relevant exercise seriously. Is the students are assessed according to teaching curriculum, they would have difficulty passing exams, not to say graduating on time. If the students could not graduate, it is hard for universities to please the parents and even the whole society. In this case, some universities choose to set a highest rate of failure in exams; some even go further to connect exam scores of students with the assessment of teachers. Consequently, teachers could only reduce the difficulty of exams, narrow down the coverage of exams and raise the ratio of daily performance. These measures will definitely influence the quality of college education and the consequent expectation of companies towards college graduates.

The poor personal quality of some teachers does not match the expectation of the whole society.

Schools of higher education should be the cradle of talents, and high-quality talents could only be cultivated by high-quality teaching staff. The quality of a teacher is composed of vocational dedication and teaching skill. The effective establishment of proper outlook of college teachers towards their career will surely influence the quality of their students.

The teaching objective of colleges and universities is confronted with severe challenge and pressure: on the one hand, teachers must continue with their learning of knowledge to perfect their knowledge structure, and on the other hand they need to conduct research and spend much time on their teaching task. Only when college teachers are fully dedicated to their teaching could the teaching process and result in classroom be fully guaranteed. But there is a common phenomenon in college campuses: some teachers are rarely seen except in classroom. They are engaging themselves with projects, training programs, advertisements and businesses for their own companies. Some others are being pushed by the deadlines of composing their own books. In a word, without enough
emphasis on their teaching vocation and taking teaching as even part-time job, these teachers are engaged with tasks other than their teaching, which will surely interfere with their teaching result.

**The work of counselors and instructors is not effective.**

The amount of counselors cannot meet increasing demand since most counselors are working part-time as counselors. Full-time counselors are expected for each school and each grade and at least one part-time instructor is in need for each class. But in most cases each counselor is working for 200 students or even more than 500 in some universities. Besides, most of the counselors are young and low in their degree. Some counselors are even not serving students of the same major with their own, most counselors are inexperienced in teaching and they have never undertaken any teaching and research project and program. Therefore they may have difficulty helping students with knowledge of their major or employment. Unsteady counselors staff has been one of the most serious problems affecting student education and management. In most colleges in China a counselor will be regarded as well experienced after three or four years of work, and most counselors would choose to pursue their Ph.D. degree or to teach after two or three years. With ambiguous responsibilities, numerous obligations and too much routine work including teaching affairs, exams, internships, make-ups and various trainings programs, most counselors do not have time for ideological and political education of college students.

The selection mechanism and team structure of college instructors is far from reasonable. According to the documents of the Ministry of Education, each class in college should have a part-time instructor, which means an instructor has his/her full-time tasks. Most instructors are young teachers assigned to take the task without considering the willingness and competence of those teachers for the job. Due to their full-time teaching and research tasks, most instructors cannot spent enough time and effort on this task. Many instructors fail to memorize the faces or even names of their students, and they cannot organize sufficient class activities. Consequently, it is not hard to imagine their working effect as instructors.

**The assessment for teaching and mechanism of title promotion are not reasonable.**

In most colleges in China, “academic GDP” dominates not only title promotion but also the values and interest distribution. It has become an unwritten rule to emphasize research and ignore teaching, and the rule is even more obvious for universities of celebrity. As is well known, a teacher can only earn his poor salary through teaching, but he could make handsome economic reward and enjoy advantage in title promotion through research.

Since it is difficult to reasonably assess teaching quality, many universities are weakening its role in overall assessment. On the contrary, academic GDP has taken the leading role, with projects, programs, papers and funding being overemphasized. As a result, the ecology of higher education is endangered, and more and more teachers have got off-track in teaching and in the pursuit of college education.

**Possible proposals for the weariness toward study among college students**

A better preliminary education of freshmen should be conducted to make them better understand their majors, universities, life and study on campus. Freshmen should also be made aware of the qualifications and obligations of contemporary college students. They are supposed to set clear goals for their college life and they should aim high to work hard for the prosperity of their motherland. They should be taught to set clear goals, replace passive learning in high school with active learning in college, arrange their time reasonably and make the most of resources on the Internet.

The problem of taking teaching as the sideline of research should be solved but not through the self-discipline of teachers themselves. Firstly, institutes of higher education should value professional ethics. Through education and guidance, college teacher should realize the importance of their job and the importance of improving education quality for cultivating the potential of
students. Only in this way could they better their dedication to their job, improve their sense of obligation and responsibility and change their contempt attitude towards teaching.

Teaching assessment for teachers should be changed. The effort of different teachers in their teaching should be taken into account in the overall teaching assessment. Those teachers should be warned if they refuse to spend enough time and effort in teaching, fail to achieve desirable teaching result and are regarded as incompetent by their students. In all, teachers should be made know that the job is not a lifelong guarantee. They should pay the price or even lose the job if they cannot teach well. At the same time, a strict management over the teaching process should be conducted and education of professional ethics should be arranged so that those teachers could realize and correct their mistakes.

It is essential to conduct ideological and political education for teachers to help them deal with the relationship between teaching and research and to making teaching their priority. If some teachers fail to achieve good teaching result and refuse to make teaching their top priority, effective measures should be taken even to remove their qualification to teach.

The significance of teaching should be fully realized. In order to create a good atmosphere of valuing teaching, institutes of higher education are expected to attach more importance in teaching in title promotion and teacher evaluation so that teachers could be encouraged to spend more time and effort to teaching. Students can also be allowed to give a score to the teaching quality of their teachers so that students could get actively involved in the assessment of teaching quality. Some colleges and universities have already introduced the mechanism of competition for class and post. In this way, students have much freedom to choose the teachers they like and teachers could have a proper sense of crisis. These are all effective measures to improve the enthusiasm and initiative of teachers.

Institutes of higher education should strengthen top-level system design to solve problems like insufficient amount of counselors and poor correspondence in the major between counselors and students. Responsibilities of teaching, management and ideological and political education should be fully clarified, the operation of management system should be fully specified and regulated, so that counselors could be freed from tedious routine affairs and their workload could be effectively reduced. Counselors should be allowed to say no to duties other than theirs and do well their own responsibilities. On the basis of this, a scientific evaluation system should be explored to strengthen relevant division of labor and clarify correspondent responsibility.

The selection mechanism for instructors should be further optimized to ensure the quality of instructor team. At present, instructors in college are under the workload of class management, ideological education, academic guidance, life service, psychological treatment and career planning. The evaluation system of college instructors should be improved so that the hard work of instructors could be reasonably evaluated. Relevant evaluation results should correlate with the appointment, appraise and promotion of instructors. Instructor task and its evaluation result should be made a premise of title promotion. A sound and effective rewarding system should be established to stimulate the enthusiasm of instructor team.

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References


