Research on the Teaching Model for Young Teachers' Teaching Ability—Based on Teaching Team

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Abstract. The teaching level of young teachers is related to the continuous improvement of teaching quality in colleges and universities. The teaching team has become the garden for young teachers to take root in teaching and enhance their abilities. To promote of faculty teaching development, this paper focuses on teaching team construction and puts forward the "1+1+4" training mode of young teachers' teaching ability. Besides, reflection on this topic is also made.

Introduction

The former Harvard University President Colonant, a well-known educator, has said: "Honors of university do not lie in her school buildings and the number of the teaching faculty, but in the quality of teachers in different generation." Cultivating high-level talents, making high-level achievement and providing a high standard of service are inseparable from high-quality teachers, who will benefit from faculty development. Over the years, "faculty development" has become a hot topic in higher education research. Some of the authoritative organizations in the United States have defined the development of university teachers. The International Education Encyclopedia and the National Education Association (NEA) have published the report "University Teacher Development: Enhancing National Power", which says university teachers' development includes development in teaching, specialty, organization and individual. After analyzing the available definitions of the development of university teachers from different perspective, it is found that almost all the definitions contain and give priority to teaching development. As Mr. Pan Mao yuan put it, in the narrow sense, the development of university teachers emphasize more the development and improvement of educators, that is, to emphasize the improvement of teachers' teaching ability.

Research Background

"2015 National Education Development Statistics Bulletin" shows that gross enrollment rate for higher education has reached 40.0%. China is in a new stage from large-scale higher education to developed higher education. The quality of teachers is an important factor restricting the quality of higher education. In higher institutions, teachers are the implementers of teaching activities and also the executives of education plan. To a large extent, teaching ability affects the quality of teaching. The enhancement of teaching ability has drawn high attention from three different levels as nation-wide, university and individual teachers.

The Requirements of the Nation

During the "Eleventh Five-year" period, on account of the ineffectiveness of teaching and research departments and other grass-roots teaching organizations, the state put forward the construction of teaching team initiative, serving as an important part in "Undergraduate Teaching Quality and Teaching Reform Project". It aims to improve the teaching level, reform teaching contents and methods and develop teaching resources through the mechanism of teamwork. Meanwhile, it also hopes to facilitate teaching seminars and experience exchange, promote passing on, helping and
instructing as well as integrating the old, middle-aged and young in one team, so as to improve the teaching level.

During the "Twelfth Five-year" period, the core target is to improve the overall quality of higher education. To train high-quality teachers is considered as the primary safeguard measure to improve the quality of higher education in "Outline of the National Medium and Long Term Education Reform and Development Plan (2010-2020)".

In March 2012, there was a clear requirement in “A number of opinions on the comprehensive improvement of the quality of higher education” issued by the Ministry of Education: the general establishment of centers for teaching and faculty development, together with a planned training and consultation for teachers are advised to improve the professional level and teaching ability of young and middle-aged teachers.

**The Demands of Higher Institutions**

Among the four major functions of higher institutions, personnel’s training is the fundamental one. High-quality teacher is an important guarantee to cultivate high-quality personnel. In the report of “National Education Development in 2014” issued by the Ministry of Education, there were 1.535 million full-time teachers in higher institutions that year, among which there were 128.6 million young people and middle-aged ones under the age of 50, accounting for 83.8% . The number of teachers with intermediate and primary technical level accounts for 53.6%.

With the young and middle-aged teachers as the main body of the teaching staff, it is an important proposition in the teaching team construction to improve the teachers' teaching ability. In 2012, the Ministry of Education began to support 30 national level faculty teaching development demonstration centers in the universities authorized by the central ministries and commissions. Under the support and guidance of the national policy, the teacher development organization has become an important platform for the development of teachers. As of July 2015, 12 higher institutions of Chinese medicine have established teacher development centers. Whether it is an independent existence or an attachment, regardless of its institution name, organization level, staffing, etc., its main function is to provide teaching training and research, as well as offering teaching resources and advisory services. It also organizes academic salons, teaching competitions, demonstration teaching etc. and gives teaching evaluation and feedback.

**The Demands of Teachers**

During May 20 and July 20, 2014, Professor Shen Hong and her team from Hua Zhong University of Science and Technology have a project named "Study on the Efficiency of University Teachers’ Evaluation" sponsored by the National Natural Science Foundation. They conducted a nationwide "Chinese university teacher work and development survey" for this project. A total of 5186 questionnaires were collected from 88 public universities in 13 provinces (cities and districts) from the east, middle and west of the country by quota sampling and random sampling. The statistics shows that average teaching time is 52% of the total working hours in a week. It is also discovered that the evaluation and the assessment, university management, teachers' living status and teacher professional development have become the most concerned issue of university teachers. Survey shows that teachers are more concerned about the development of content, which "teacher literacy" accounted for 55% of the share, compared with major body and approach of the professional development.

This team’s investigation confirms the fact that in the face of teaching tasks that occupy more than half of the working hours, most teachers have a demand for the improvement of teaching knowledge and teaching ability.

**Current Research**

National Quality Engineering Project surprisingly launched teaching team construction program. Experts generally believe that it will be a new way to strengthen the teaching team construction. As a researcher of higher education in University of Chinese Medicine, based on the present situation
of teachers’ development in higher institution of Chinese medicine, the author inspected the state of teaching team construction and the teaching ability enhancement of young teachers. It is found that at present, the teaching team has not yet achieved the ideal of improving teachers' teaching ability.

**Ineffective Teaching Team Construction**

In 2007, the state approved the construction of 100 nation-level teaching teams, while the number is up to 300 in 2008. Li Hong Wei, an associate researcher at the China Institute of Labor Relations, focuses on analyzing the leaders and scale of the 400 teaching teams, believes that there is a problem that the leaders are older and the administrative tendencies clearly lead to the ineffective construction of the team. Besides, the team size is not conducive to the division of labor and mutual cooperation. To a certain extent, this study pointed out the status quo of teaching team construction. Promoted by the proposal of national teaching team construction project, my university and others in Jiangxi Province have carried out the teaching team construction. At present, the teaching teams at all levels in my university are from this subject group. They are all loosely-organized and lack of scientific guidance in the construction process.

**Young Teachers' Teaching Ability to be Improved**

State Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine issued the "2014 National Chinese Medicine Statistics Digest" showing that in 2014, the number of full-time teachers in higher institution of Chinese medicine is 26,441, including 21,850 young teachers under the age of 50, accounting for 82.6%, with intermediate technical positions and below accounting for 64.5%.

Most of the young teachers in higher institution of Chinese Medicine have master's or higher degree, but their personal experience also follows the pattern "from university to university, from classroom to classroom, from theory to theory", resulting in the lack of knowledge, experiences in and education and teaching methodology.

Training of Chinese medicine personnel has particular characteristics, so the teaching process is also significantly different from other disciplines. It requires not only profound theoretical basis and rich clinical experience of the teachers, but also a master of the course methodology and classroom teaching ability. Concerning clinical experience and teaching ability, most young teachers can not have both.

The development of teachers in higher institution of Chinese medicine attaches importance to the "passing on, helping and instructing" among the old, middle-aged and young teachers. There is a saying "red blossoms and green leaves" in the institutions where the set-up of disciplines has distinctive characteristics. Such as in higher institution of Chinese Medicine, Chinese medication and Chinese medicine are the major disciplines, being the "red blossoms", while other disciplines are often regarded as "edge disciplines", being "green leaves". Therefore, in the development strategy, it is inevitable to give priority to the major disciplines. Hence, most often other disciplines are combined with the major disciplines, or even serve the major disciplines. To highlight the characteristics of the medical institutions, it is easy to understand that other disciplines are inclined to be related with Chinese medicine or Chinese medication. At this time, teachers who don’t work in Chinese medicine-related disciplines have strong demand of interdisciplinary learning.

**Research Approach**

The whole study is based on the reality of my university. Since the expand enrollment and establishment of new campus, a large number of young teachers with doctor or master degree were recruited. 226 new teachers recruited from 2009 to 2013 account for 22.6% of the faculty. They worked as college teachers, but it is questionable whether they have independent teaching and disciplinary research ability. It is an urgent task faced by my university to make them qualified or excellent as soon as possible. Since the beginning of 2007, research and practice has been carried out to improve the young teachers teaching ability and connotation, focusing on the construction of teaching team.

There are a variety of teaching teams in the university, including obvious ones as those founded...
by a project, and also hidden ones such as those naturally gathered together for a common goal. The reason for the teacher to group together varies. Some are guided by excellent culture, some are task-driven, and others may share the same course. Regardless of how they are formed and their purpose, the meaning of their existence is inseparable from "teaching". In this study, the teaching team is defined as the teaching community which is composed of teachers who communicate and cooperate with each other, and which take the teacher development center as the platform to improve the teaching ability. In this community, members can live and develop together.

Young teachers need to be guided, collaborated and accompanied. Joining the teaching team is an effective way to enhance their teaching ability. Based on the teaching team, the enhancement refers to the process of increasing the knowledge, attitude and ability in the professional ethics, education and teaching, scientific research, practical service and internationalization of the young teachers in the teaching team they belong to.

**Model Exploring**

Young teachers are "seedling" needed to be raised carefully. University is like a forest with a large number of "seedlings" and "big trees". The teacher development center is "a garden with a gardener" focused on teaching ability enhancement. The teaching teams are pieces of land in the garden with both "seedlings" and "big trees". The concept of "growing seedlings" is gradually formed in the process of research and practice. In the big garden of teacher development center or in the small land of the teaching team, to water "seedling" with "learning, researching, application and culture" is necessary to give "nourishment" for the development of young talents.

The process of enhancing the teaching ability is like a small tree growing into a towering tree. According to our practice, we have explored a new cultivating mode of “1+1+4”, 1 "teacher development center" as the garden, 1 “teaching team” as the soil 4 pathways including "learning, research, application and culture". In this “1+1+4” cultivating mode, the teacher development center is the garden, the platform, the carrier; the teaching team is the soil and the root for the young teachers; "learning, researching, practicing and culture" are the pathways as we follow the principle of building strong basic knowledge. 'Learning' is the root for enhancing the literacy; 'research' is the main task; the application of the ideas is as 'leaves'.

In this mode, "learning" is the basis for the improvement of teaching ability of young teachers, requiring a variety of basic education and teaching theories, methods, techniques, etc., including not only external teacher trainings organized by various level (national, provincial, university, hospital), but also teachers take the initiative to learn and improve their teaching ability personally, participating in various lectures, salons, seminars and so on.

"Research" is the "nutrient" of young teachers' teaching ability, requiring in-depth exploration of teaching research, which in turn serves teaching, including the teaching and research projects organized by others, and also various teaching reform teachers carried out in the teaching process.

"Training" is the "wind and rain" that will enhance the young teachers teaching ability, applying the concept of research to the teaching process, including the various teaching competitions organized by others, and also the practice of the education and teaching ideas and knowledge in each class.

"Culture" is the sun and air for the young teachers to enhance the teaching ability. To build a superior teaching and learning culture is not only to create an excellent atmosphere, but also the individual pursuit of excellence in teaching. It includes national, provincial and university policies to promote teaching, non-institutional culture within the university, and the individual's enthusiasm, dedication and love for teaching.

"Learning, research, application, culture" are like the roots, trunks, branches and leaves in a tree. Learning is like the root, research the trunk, application the branches, and culture the leaves. In this process, learning lays the foundation; research provides the nutrition; application is like rain and wind, culture is like the sun and air; teaching team is like soil for the "young"; teacher development center is like "garden with a gardener". The teaching ability enhancement of young teachers lies in the 4 pathways, in the soil of the teaching team, in the teacher development center of the garden.
With this environment, their efforts will be well-paid and achieve scientific growth. These four methods complement each other, jointly nourish the "seedling" growth and cultivate young teachers to become talent.

**Rational Thinking**

In the "114" model, not the teacher development researcher and teacher development center managers, but the young teachers themselves are playing the leading role. It is particularly important for the teachers to be voluntarily involved and learn actively, just as seedlings should take root in the soil, in order to lay the foundation for their growth. Teaching research is an academic research requiring teamwork, rather than individual action. The brainstorming and cooperation provide a variety of rich nutrients for the growth of young crops. Teaching training requires the active participation of many young people. Going through tough situation will provide them the guidance, collaboration and the incentive. In the process of "learning" "researching" and "application", new pieces of young crops grows higher slowly, with branches and leaves. Unknowingly, there are a lot of shades in Garden where strong teaching culture is formed. To from a lasting and stable culture requires the guidance of educational ideas, the value identification of participants and encouragement. Passionate teachers and students with high ideals, and strong promoters and followers are also necessary. Besides, young teachers should also be emotional attached to the team.

**Conclusion**

Young seedlings do not grow into a tree overnight. It takes time for the young teachers to enhance their teaching ability. With the continuous development of higher education, they will have to face new situations and new problems. However, it is convinced that if you go alone, you can go faster; however, if you go with a group of people, you can go further. The teaching team is necessary for the ability enhancement of young teachers, and the teaching team is sure to cultivate a batch of seedlings.

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