

Study on the Current Situation and Countermeasures of the Teachers' Professional Quality in Primary and Middle Schools in Qiang Area in China

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Abstract

A questionnaire is designed to survey the professional knowledge, professional skills and professional attitude of the teachers in primary and middle schools in Qiang area. The results show that these teachers' professional quality has had much progress in recent years, but there are still some problems worthy of attention. The article put forward some suggestions which aims to promote the professional development of these teachers in Qiang area.

Key words: The teachers in primary and middle school in Qiang area; Teachers' professional quality; Development

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INTRODUCTION

The Qiang ethnic group is one of the ancient ethnic groups in China. According to the china's sixth population census in 2010, the Qiang population reached 309,576. The main gathering area of Qiang ethnic group is the severely affected areas in the deadly May 12 Earthquake in 2008. After the earthquake the government rebuilt the school education. It is significant to know the teachers' professional quality in order to develop the school education of Qiang. Teachers' professional quality means the knowledge, skills, moral character, ideas, behavior

and personality; etc. which teachers complete the teaching tasks when the teachers grow up from occupation to the profession (Meng, 2004). In order to investigate the current situation of the teachers' professional quality in primary and secondary school in Qiang area, We compile a questionnaire on teachers' professional quality in primary and secondary school which involves three categories: professional knowledge, professional skills, and professional attitude of teachers. Among them, the professional knowledge includes academic qualification, general knowledge, teaching knowledge, educational knowledge, etc.; the teachers' professional skills include teaching ability, modern educational technology application ability, research ability and so on; the teachers' professional attitudes include professional identity, professional aptitude, professional self-identity, etc.. In March 2014, the questionnaire was distributed to 300 teachers anonymously in primary and middle schools in Maoxian county, Wenchuan county and Beichuan county which are the main gathering areas of Qiang in Sichuan province. The results and analysis of the questionnaire are as the following.

1. THE CURRENT SITUATION OF THE TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL QUALITY

1.1 The Development of Professional Knowledge

To some extent, teachers' academic qualifications reflect the level of teachers' professional knowledge. According to the survey, teacher qualifications compliance rate in primary schools is 99.4%, in junior schools is 98.1%, and that in senior schools is 87.8%. The rates of the teacher qualifications in primary schools and junior schools keep consistence with those of the whole country during the same period, and so does the rate of the teachers in primary schools who has college degree and the rate of the teachers in middle schools who has bachelor degree.

But the teacher qualifications compliance rate of junior high schools is a little lower than the average level of the whole country during the same period. This conclusion roughly coincides with the statistical data in Qiang area in recent years.

The results of the survey also showed that, the teacher qualifications compliance rate (aged from 20 to 30) is higher than the other age group teachers. It reflects that in recent years, new teachers' qualifications compliance is continuously improved. As to the question "the professional knowledge you think you are the most short of", we have found that teachers demand for practical knowledge in the first place, theoretical knowledge education ranks second, the education department of knowledge in third place. The needs of modern educational technology knowledge and general cultural knowledge are ranked four and five. It reflects that under the process of the promotion of the reform of the new curriculum of China, the view of traditional knowledge which stresses the subject teaching knowledge of the teachers in Qiang area is changing now, and teachers started to notice practical knowledge and educational theory knowledge which aims to adjust and improve knowledge structure of themselves.

1.2 The Development of Professional Ability

The research investigated teachers' teaching ability in elementary and secondary school in Qiang area. The results showed: 63.5% teachers need to improve their subject teaching ability; 34.7% teachers lack of the ability of teaching innovation; the needs for the ability of subject thinking, the ability of subject teaching, the ability of multimedia application and the ability of looking up and analyzing the data is respectively about 33.6%, 22.3%, 17.5% and 12.3%. As to the aspect of the application of modern educational technology, the rate of use independently reaches 19.6%, occasionally used independently accounts for 28.9%, use but with others' help accounts for 23.4%, never use educational technology accounts for 28.1%. It reveals that, older teachers use less computer-aided instruction. The teachers who never use this technology always work in a village or town. Obviously, during the information age, the needs of the application of the ability of modern educational technology in Qiang district need to be improved. And the ability to research is the motive force for the sustainable development of the teachers, even for the school. This research reveals that: Most of the teachers have college degree and higher degree. It suggests that most teachers have the ability to research. However, the results of the research shows that: As to the question "Would you do teach reflection after class?" 11.9% of teachers wrote some thoughts, 46.5% of teachers would think but never wrote, and others sometimes thought or never thought. As to the question "which educational periodicals do you usually read?" and "how many papers have you

published?", 42.6% teachers seldom read educational periodicals, 5.4% of teachers have published one or more papers. Therefore, we can draw a conclusion: Most of the teachers in elementary and middle school of Qiang district have never recognized that the effects of the reflection for teaching practice is essential to the results of Teaching effect, so they rarely regard participating in scientific research as the means to improve professional quality of oneself.

1.3 The Developing Situation of Professional Attitude

A sense of occupational identity for teacher can reflect the professional attitude of a teacher to some extent. Referring to the question "whether you are contented with being a teacher", 28.9% teachers chose the option "very contented", 41.4% teachers chose the answer "not satisfied but more peace of mind." 19.5% teachers chose the option "although not at ease but can have a try" and 9.3% of the teachers chose "want to change a career". According to the distribution which we just referred, the occupation satisfaction rate of the teacher in primary schools is lower than teachers in middle and high schools. This may be related to the difficult natural environment of primary school teachers. There are no significant differences between different ages about this question. Generally; the sense of identity for occupation of teachers in Qiang district is not high. This situation is bound to affect the enthusiasm of professional development of teachers in Qiang area and the stability of teaching staff in Qiang district.

1.4 The Needs and the Influencing Factors of the Development of Professional Quality

The investigation reflects that: The professional knowledge, professional ability and professional attitude of teachers in different age need different promotion aspects. The teachers (aged 18-30) need to be improved their professional knowledge, professional skills and professional attitude. The needs for professional knowledge and professional ability of the teachers (aged 31-40) are obviously decreased, though their attitudes toward teaching are not steady. The teachers (aged 41-50) are extending their professional knowledge, but their professional ability is fecund, and they are contented with their occupation. The teachers (aged 51-60) have had abundant teaching experience. Their sense of identity for occupation is stable, but their professional ability needs to be improved. Since the survey was conducted by asking the teachers' needs about their professional development, some affects can not be excluded, for example the teacher's study motion may be decreased as the age grows. As the factors which affects teachers' professional development, 28.1% teachers think their salary is low. 27.2% teachers think it is due to lack of educational theory and skills. 7.8% teachers think

their knowledge is not enough. 31.1% teachers think it is related to the circumstance and atmosphere of the schools. Obviously, most teachers attributed the factors to the external, uncontrollable factors. They seldom took themselves into account. Thus, it is urgent to guide the teachers to attribute correctly. Teachers in Qiang district should know more about their teaching behavior and professional development to upgrade their professional quality. As to the question about how to get professional development, 26.8% teachers hope the communication and collaboration between colleagues. 30.4% teachers hope to get further studies. 9.9% teachers hope to self-study. 8.4% teachers expect to host or participate in educational research. 23.1% teachers want to improve their own professional development by going out to study. It reveals that the way that the teachers in Qiang district can get professional development has multiple characters. The traditional way to improve their professional development reveals narrow.

1.5 The Attitude Towards the Qiang Culture

The particularity of professional quality of teachers in ethnic regions reflects the attitude and comprehension of ethnic culture. Qiang ethnic is a minority group in China, and they have their own language. The investigation reflected that, 30.6% Qiang Ethnic teachers expect Qiang language can inherit, especially for old teachers. 72% teachers of Qiang ethnic supposed to have a Qiang culture curriculum once a week. And this rate is higher than the teacher who is not belonging to Qiang Ethnic. This phenomenon suggested that Qiang ethnic teachers have a strong motion for inheriting Qiang culture. However, the research also showed that, the degree of mastery of teachers of Qiang ethnic is very limited. As a teacher of Qiang ethnic, 20% of the teachers can say little language and know little culture of Qiang ethnic. As a teacher not of Qiang ethnic, there are also little people who know language of Qiang and culture of Qiang. This fact disclosed that the culture of modern social minority is confronting with a big shock now. The duty of Qiang ethnic teacher is to protect and inherit the Qiang culture. However they go far away from their own culture, even they agree that the school should teach Qiang culture. It is a question that worth discussing.

2. PROBLEMS AND SUGGESTIONS

Generally, the professional quality of teachers in primary and middle schools in Qiang district developed a lot in recent years. This is mainly reflected that: a) Quite a part of teachers lack of modern educational idea. They are used to apply the traditional teaching method and also ignore the summary of teaching experience. They also don't know how to get practical knowledge to develop themselves from the teaching reflection and scientific

research. b) Teachers of Qiang ethnic know little on how to renew knowledge. There are few teachers know about the principle and the rule of education. So they can hardly adapt to the needs of social development and Quality education. c) The ability of teachers is poor. And they can't adapt to the requirement of the reform of New Curriculum. d) Most of teachers of Qiang Ethnic are not satisfied with their occupation. It may affect the initiative of the development of professional Quality of teachers of Qiang ethnic. e) Confronting with the shock of modernism and examination-oriented education, parts of the teachers has an doubt attitude on whether it is necessary to inherit culture of Qiang ethnic at school. Though teachers of Qiang ethnic have a special emotion on culture of Qiang ethnic, the culture of Qiang Ethnic, they mastered a little. So it may affect the effect of the inheritance of culture of Qiang ethnic.

Above all, we put forward some suggestions on how to promote the development of professional Quality of teachers in primary and middle schools in Qiang district. a) A good environment for teachers' professional development should be created, especially the salary of teachers. The evaluation system of teachers' performance that judged by the score of a student's test should be changed. b) The system of teachers' learning should be reformed. Teachers of Qiang ethnic should be encouraged to pay attention to the combination of theory and practice and choose the content of continuing education according to the needs of their own development. Teachers of Qiang ethnic should be given more free times. c) Humanistic concern should be strengthened. The administrators of education should make measures by judging the actual needs of the professional development of teachers in the region of minority. They also should encourage teachers of Qiang ethnic to cooperate with each other in order to create a harmonious campus culture. d) Teachers of Qiang ethnic should be helped to make a plan for the development of their career so as to develop their own ability of how to develop themselves. e) Culture of Qiang ethnic should be on the agenda in order to promote the development of professional quality of teachers in primary and middle school in Qiang district.

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