

Problems and Strategies of Young Female Teachers' Professional Development in Application University

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Abstract

National reform on higher education has been taken in recent years. National medium and long-term plan for education reform and development (2010-2020) propose to improve the quality of higher education and to build faculty team with profession and morals. Young female teachers in application university face chance and challenge. Their professional morals, academic knowledge, teaching skills and scientific research ability are necessary to be improved in accordance with reform. The status of their professional development is analyzed deeply and some problems are explored. Then some strategies are proposed to promote teachers’ development and higher education reform.

Key words: Professional development; Young female teachers; Application university

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INTRODUCTION

In order to meet the needs of economical development and educational reform, China’s educational department proposes a national development plan for teachers at all levels. Economical development in local areas pushes the reform of higher education. Therefore, a lot of newly-built integrated universities face the chance of transformation into application universities, which attract large quantities of students and staff. In most cases, the staff employed are young female teachers. So the application universities’ development is directly related to teachers’ professional development.

The connotation of young female teachers’ professional development in application universities mainly refers to a dynamic process of their development in professional morals, academic knowledge, teaching skills, scientific research ability, social management and so on. It can be interpreted from three aspects. First, the core of young female teachers’ professional development is self-development with autonomy. Second, the content of their professional development mainly consists of professional morals, academic knowledge, teaching skills, scientific research ability as a whole. Third, the process of their professional development is not still but dynamic all the time.

1. PROBLEMS OF YOUNG FEMALE TEACHERS’ PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

1.1 Poor Awareness of Autonomy in Their Professional Development

The autonomy in teachers’ professional development refers to their positive awareness and inner desire in improving their profession in morals, teaching skills,

research ability, social management and so on. The automatic consciousness is the core motive power of teachers' professional development which not only stimulates teachers to perform their own subjective initiative fully but also instructs teachers to incorporate their past knowledge and experience with their future development plan systematically. However, young female teachers in application universities are passive to develop themselves professionally in recent years. They lack of subjective motive and professional growth plan. They have hazy understanding towards the connotation of teachers' professional development. To some extent, they consider it unimportant and necessary in their career. They are unwilling to participate in activities connected with their professional development.

1.2 Heavy Task and Unsuccessful Scientific Research in Their Professional Development

With the expansion of application universities, the number of students increases rapidly on a large scale which leads to insufficient teaching resources. As a result, young female teachers have a heavy burden to finish teaching tasks and more classes. Especially those in foreign languages department take the basic English class of the whole school. They don't have enough time to prepare classes, let alone do scientific research. Because at this time, most young female teachers face a much more important task to finish which counts a lot for their life. They are busy looking for a right man to get married. In most cases they gave birth to their babies after marriage. They have a lot of family chores to deal with. In this situation, they have no improvement in both teaching and scientific research.

1.3 The Formalization of Young Female Teachers' Professional Development

The activities dedicated to young female teachers' professional development in application universities attach much more importance to the form than to the content, which can not perform the function of promoting teachers' level. Generally speaking, the young female teachers in application universities at present stage are graduates with master degree or doctor degree who just came out of school gate without receiving special training of teaching experience. After they are admitted to be faculty members, it is essential for them to receive new employee orientation training. But the content of the training is dominated by theoretical education methodology and theoretical psychology. It doesn't work well because the content is very general without specialty aiming at training young female teachers. What's more, application universities carry out the policy of teacher certificate. Teachers regularly take the job first and then win the qualification of teachers' position. The established convention upside down the normal order and makes the teacher certificate system existing in form.

2. STRATEGIES OF YOUNG FEMALE TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

2.1 From the Perspective of National Policy and School Policy

2.1.1 To Establish Essential Standards of Young Female Teachers' Professional Development

Detailed standards or elaborate frame have not been set up in China in recent years. Conventionally the government and the school will use teacher certificate to take the place of teachers' professional development standards. Thus it is necessary for the government and school to establish standards to measure young female teachers' professional development, which could work well together with teachers' qualification certificate to supervise their lifelong study to promote their professional development. The core element of young female teachers' professional standards includes professional emotion and professional quality. Professional emotion belongs to the category of teachers' professional morals which could be regarded as the source of power of their professional development. Teachers' professional quality mainly exists in teachers' professional knowledge and professional ability, which become the basic condition of a qualified teacher. It is a long way to go for young female teachers. Different professional standards should vary from stage to stage. As a special group, the professional development of young female teachers is at the initial stage.

2.1.2 To Perfect the Cultivation Modes of Young Female Teachers' Majors

Different majors have different requirements in professional development. In the past years, the application universities to some extent have paid some attention to young female teachers' development. But the education content is single and monotonous which focuses on theoretical teaching techniques. The training modes are job-training beforehand and further study training without variety and diversity. So a new 3T mode (technology, teaming and transference mode) with specific target should be established to work out teachers' problems at every stage for different majors in their process of professional development.

2.1.3 To Reform Young Female Teachers' Evaluation System

Young female teacher's especially new employers in application universities have the great pressure to get married and build a new family. In most cases, they take a lot of family burden with children. They have limited time and energy devoted to teaching and scientific career. Therefore, the evaluation standards for young female teachers should be different from male teachers. The standards should be more loose and lower towards female

teachers. Furthermore, the evaluation system should be separated by different subjects and positions to evaluate. In terms of heavy family burden, especially during the first five years enrolled in school, the young female teachers should not be assessed in scientific research to take as qualifications of professional titles.

2.2 From the Perspective of Young Female Teachers Themselves

2.2.1 To Set Up Scientific Viewpoint of Young Female Teachers Professional Development

The professional development of young female teachers in application universities is a consistent dynamic process with continuity, unity and lifelong identity. Therefore, young female teachers should construct the ideas of automatic development as an individual, communicative cooperation as a group, reflective practice of class teaching and lifelong learning. The core factor is female teachers' inner willingness to develop themselves and realize the importance of automatic development for their career. So they would love to take actions autonomously without intimidation by school. What's more, the external school institutions should give enough support and assurance to enable young female teachers to have enough initiative and automatic power to realize their professional self-development. Group work and communication plays an important role in their professional development to enhance teachers' professional quality and ability. Teaching practice on the platform is the source and water of their development. Self-reflection and academic research are the power of teachers' professional development. So reflective practice should be strengthened. As the transmitter of knowledge by teachers, the idea of lifelong study should be gone through one's life.

2.2.2 To Make Reasonable and Scientific Professional Development Plan

Young female teachers in application universities should make appropriate plan tailored to their own characteristics and personal family background. Professional plans have great effects towards their own future as a guide which can not only inspire young teachers' potential, but also explore the inner motive of young female teachers' professional development to improve their own ability. Their process is dynamic process with special requirements at every stage.

So their professional development plan must vary from stage to stage.

2.3 To Deal With Teaching and Research Task Properly

The newly admitted young female teachers face the question of role transmission properly from a student into a teacher. The most important thing for them is to adjust themselves as soon as possible to become a qualified college teacher. Teaching capacity is the basic requirement in skill. So the emergency of young female teachers is to receive training and improve teaching capability. Meanwhile they keep themselves in advance with academic status. If like, they would do some scientific research according to their own condition. Young female teachers had better realize that teaching and academic research are not contradictory but complementary. High quality teaching will effectively stimulate teacher's academic research. In turn, academic research will have great influence on teaching. They should put them into practice in class.

CONCLUSION

In a word, with the reform of national higher education, it is essential for young female teachers in application universities to have a positive attitude to enhance their levels in professional morals, academic knowledge, teaching skills and scientific research and so on. Although there are some problems existing in their daily life and work, they should try their best to work hard to overcome these difficulties. Some strategies are suggested to help young female teachers to realize their professional development.

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