

Retrospect and Prospect: A Study on the Professional Spirit of Chinese University Teachers

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Abstract: *The professional spirit of university teachers is the endogenous driving force for teachers to stimulate real-life survival and education activities in educational and teaching practice, and it is also the expression of future value for pursuing individual professional life growth. By sorting out the research on the professional spirit of university teachers by Chinese scholars, it is analyzed that the research topic focuses on concepts, content, and cultivation paths, and a review is made. Looking forward to the future, we should cultivate the professional spirit of university teachers by guiding them by professional standards, strengthening their professional identity, and constructing a healthy ecological environment.*

Keywords: *China; Universities; Teacher professionalism*

1. Introduction

The research results on the professional spirit of university teachers inject endogenous experience into the development of Chinese teacher education. Based on high-quality research results, this study objectively presents the research mirror of the professional spirit of university teachers, explores the problems of the endogenous development of the professional spirit of university teachers, and provides valuable information for teacher education researchers on how to innovate and adhere to the professional spirit of university teachers.

2. Research data sources and development history

2.1. Research data sources

Using the Chinese Journal Full Text Database as the platform, the research data sources are limited to the Chinese Social Science Citation Index and the "Chinese Core Journal" of Peking University Library. The research data retrieval time is as of September 20, 2023. A total of 33 papers were retrieved with the theme of "teacher professionalism", and then 5 papers were retrieved with the theme of "universities+teacher professionalism". Therefore, it is urgent to increase research on the professionalism of university teachers. In addition, it is necessary to integrate the research results of teacher professionalism into teacher professional development. Therefore, it is necessary to explore the value relationship between the professionalism of university teachers and their professional development. A total of 4130 full-text search indicators were selected based on "teacher professional development" or "university teacher professionalism". After screening and excluding conferences, notices, book reviews, etc., a total of 4100 effective journals were obtained as research samples. It is advisable to keep all the given values.

2.2. Research and Development History

2.2.1. During the embryonic period (1990-2000)

The exploration of the professional spirit of university teachers can be traced back to the 1990s. "Cultivating the Professional Spirit of Teachers" published by Chinese scholar Yu Menglin is an earlier research achievement in China^[1]. During this period, there were few published achievements, mainly due to the further deepening of the social economy in the 1990s. Although this economic wave had an impact

on the traditional education concepts in certain regions of China, the respected and beloved teachers at that time had a noble professional image. Most teachers chose to strive for teaching and educating people, which was also a spiritual response to the original intention of choosing teacher education.

2.2.2. During the development period (2001-2015)

Starting from the 21st century, scholars' research on the professional spirit of university teachers has been increasing year by year. The reason for this is that China's accession to the World Trade Organization and other international events have had a significant impact. On the one hand, it has brought about changes in the economic development mode and improved people's living standards; On the other hand, the continuous output of foreign cultural ideas has led to significant changes in the ideological concepts of certain citizens, including teachers. Some intellectuals are deeply tempted by hedonism and other interests, and their inner spirit gradually moves towards emptiness. Therefore, scholars continue to pay attention to issues such as the intrinsic spirit of teachers, and have generated ideas or beliefs that adhere to humanistic spirit from within teachers, promoting the improvement of teachers' professional competence and literacy.

2.2.3. During the mature period (2016 to present)

China attaches great importance to the professional development of teachers and has introduced various policies for teacher education, including professional development, teacher ethics, and teaching staff. Faced with the era responsibility and mission of "educating people for the Party and the country" in the new era of China, teachers need to shoulder this heavy responsibility, and the internal spirit has become a long-term mechanism for educating people. Therefore, scholars continuously explore the value of teacher professionalism for teacher development and the energy it contributes to the times.

3. The theme and content of research on the professional spirit of university teachers

After analyzing the 4100 effective journals retrieved, the research mainly focuses on the concept, content, and cultivation path of teacher professionalism for the research topic. For research content, shift from a single teacher's individual spirit or ethical hierarchy to multiple elements and structures. For the research perspective, it mainly focuses on young teachers and new teachers in universities, with less research focused on elderly teachers in universities. For research methods, literature research, educational narrative, and other methods are mainly used, and quantitative research methods are less commonly used.

3.1. Research on the Concept of Professional Spirit of College Teachers

To explore the professional spirit of university teachers, it is first necessary to clarify the connotation of the professional spirit of university teachers in terms of concepts. Researchers mainly explore it from the perspectives of value theory and practice theory. The former refers to the attribute of the object meeting the needs of the subject, including the evaluation of the significance of material or spiritual phenomena for individual existence. Scholar Chen Guisheng pointed out that the pursuit of value is reflected in the satisfaction of knowledge, students, and society^[2]. He positioned the professional spirit of university teachers as the satisfaction of individual existence for object needs, highlighting the value essence of realizing the teaching profession itself. Scholar Zhou Jianmin pointed out that the professional spirit of university teachers is a collection of professional consciousness, ideological activities, and psychological states^[3]. His viewpoint expresses satisfaction with the teacher's self spiritual pleasure and is a conscious transcendence of the real world. Scholar Wang An pointed out that it is a manifestation of ideological consciousness and psychological state^[4]. These scholars have explored the value pursuit that the professional spirit of university teachers should encompass from the perspective of teacher spirit and teacher value theory.

Analyzing the practical value of the professional spirit of university teachers from the perspective of practice theory, Marx's theory of practice explains the existence of the ultimate original meaning bestowed on teachers in practice. The concept of professional spirit of university teachers proposed by Ma Yuanguang and others all mentions the professional style and spiritual realm, professional consciousness, thinking consciousness, psychological state, etc. displayed in teacher professional activities or teaching activities^[5]. Scholar Hu Shigang proposed that the professional spirit of university teachers is formed through long-term educational activities, which is a collection of practical oriented teacher awareness, thinking, and psychological state^[6]. Therefore, the professional spirit of university teachers is based on the value orientation of educating people, realizing the value of human life, promoting comprehensive and free development, and fulfilling the mission of national prosperity and

revitalization with a sense of life. It highlights the ultimate pursuit and expression of the ultimate concern for the ultimate goal and spiritual realm of "being a teacher".

3.2. A Study on the Content of Professional Spirit of College Teachers

The research on the content of the professional spirit of university teachers mainly focuses on analyzing the spiritual structure or elements, and on the other hand, exploring the role or value relationship of the professional spirit of teachers in their professional development. In the study of structure or elements, different groups of research generate different dimensions. From the perspective of university teachers, Yang Jianzhou embodies the professional spirit of teachers from eight aspects: professional awareness, literacy, beliefs, reputation, emotions, morality, dignity, and integrity^[7]. From the perspective of teachers in higher vocational colleges, the professional spirit of teachers has been embodied in their professional skills or attributes, and they have always adhered to the responsibility and sentiment of engaging in highly skilled and irreplaceable professions.

In the study of the value relationship with teacher professional development, most researchers believe that the professional spirit of university teachers is the core and fundamental role of teacher professional development, and also the spiritual pillar of teacher professional growth. Some researchers also believe that the professional spirit of teachers exists in teacher ethics and teacher culture. One of them is that the cultivation of teacher ethics in universities is centered around comprehensively improving the professional ideals and spirit of teachers; The second is that the primary indicator for the professional growth of backbone teachers in universities is professional ethics, and the upholding and trust of professional spirit play an important role.

3.3. Research on Cultivating the Professional Spirit of College Teachers

Guided by Marx's theory of practice, this study explores how teachers demonstrate their practical intention of "what should I do" in educational practice activities. Researchers mainly propose cultivation paths from the perspectives of subject and object, macro and micro. From the perspective of the main body of teachers, firstly, scholar Ulan proposed mutual learning and communication to enhance lifelong learning in the teaching profession^[8]. Enhance the noble realm of teachers. The second is that scholar Cao Gang brings the richness of professional spirit from the improvement of teacher knowledge structure^[9]. advocates learning cultural knowledge, professional subject knowledge, and educational science knowledge, and constructing a reasonable knowledge structure and perfect knowledge system. From the perspective of teacher objects, firstly, scholar Chang Le advocates for constitutionalism and collective protection of the realization of teacher professionalism^[10]. Secondly, scholar Ma Yuanguang creates a positive campus environment to improve the ecological environment of teachers as a "nutrient solution" .

There are different opinions on cultivating the professional spirit of university teachers, but overall, cultivating the professional spirit of university teachers is beneficial for improving their own qualities and promoting the process of China's education modernization reform. Specifically, the path to cultivating the professional spirit of teachers requires researching and developing effective incentive strategies and response mechanisms based on each teacher's own characteristics, such as improving teacher related benefits, increasing teacher salaries, and adjusting teacher welfare, so that teachers can feel the warmth brought by the teaching profession and are willing to strive for a lifetime in the teaching profession. Schools can provide teachers with broader career development opportunities, including promotion opportunities, research projects, etc. These incentive measures will make university teachers more engaged in teaching work and willing to contribute their own strength in the teaching profession. The country can provide more educational and training opportunities for universities to enhance teachers' professional skills and qualities. At the same time, improve the teaching and office environment of university teachers, reduce unnecessary administrative burden, and give teachers more teaching autonomy.

4. Future Prospects for Research on the Professional Spirit of University Teachers

4.1. Guiding the Professional Spirit Standards of Teachers

Establishing standards is the primary condition for guiding the professional spirit of university teachers. Firstly, conduct extensive research. Before formulating standards, the Chinese education

department should conduct extensive research, conduct research on relevant frontline teachers, conduct training workshops and seminars, and consult with relevant education researchers to fully understand the level of professional spirit development of Chinese teachers. Based on the results of the research, a level that conforms to the professional spirit development of Chinese teachers should be established. Secondly, develop draft standards. The process of formulating the draft standards for teacher professionalism needs to fully consider the roles, responsibilities, and tasks of teachers, as well as their obligations to students, society, and the country. Corresponding standards for teacher professionalism should be established for qualified, good, and excellent levels. After one academic year, three levels of teachers should be selected, and excellent level teachers should be introduced to their own experiences, Motivation that can inspire teachers at other levels to climb up. Thirdly, dynamically update standards. The standards of teacher professionalism need to change according to the times, so it is necessary to regularly evaluate the listed standards of teacher professionalism, continuously update the standards of teacher professionalism, and make the new standards conform to the professional development of teachers.

4.2. Strengthening the Professional Identity of College Teachers

The professional identity of university teachers is the core support of their professional spirit. Teacher professional identity refers to a teacher's clear and clear understanding of an individual's professional role, and their strong interest, love, and loyalty to the teaching profession they engage in. Firstly, we need to position the role of teachers. University teachers are the imparters of knowledge, the shapers of college students' personalities, and even the guiding teachers of college students' lives. Teachers need to be good disseminators of knowledge, proficient in the subject knowledge they teach, and have the ability to effectively impart this knowledge to students, with a focus on integrating critical thinking and problem-solving skills into students' minds. Teachers are responsible for shaping values, and through educational activities such as classroom discussions and practical activities, they convey important values such as social justice and fairness to college students. Teachers should take good care of emotions and pay attention to the emotional needs of each college student, especially when facing difficulties and setbacks, providing necessary guidance and assistance. Secondly, it is important to recognize the professional value of teachers. Teacher value is not about creating wealth, but about guiding quality and nurturing scientific thinking in classroom teaching, so that college students realize their attributes as "social beings" and are willing to contribute their own value to society and the country. At the same time, teachers need to take on the responsibility of showcasing their professional value in talent cultivation, social construction, cultural inheritance, knowledge innovation, and other aspects. Thirdly, it is necessary to recognize the professional ethics of teachers, enhance their own love and sense of responsibility, and always guide and care for college students like their own children.

4.3. Constructing a Healthy Ecological Environment for Universities

The ecological environment of universities is an important support for the professional spirit of university teachers. The ecological environment of universities refers to the material environment, biological environment, and social environment within universities, as well as the interaction between these environmental factors. Firstly, construct a healthy material environment, mainly building campus facilities that serve the professional spirit of teachers, such as teaching buildings, laboratories, libraries, sports fields, canteens, dormitories, etc. Secondly, to construct a benign biological environment, mainly the greening and vegetation of the campus, so that teachers can create their own value in a warm environment and enhance their professional spirit. Thirdly, building a positive social environment mainly involves building the organizational structure, management methods, academic atmosphere, teacher-student relationship, classmate relationship, campus culture, etc. of universities. Therefore, optimizing the ecological environment of universities should not only focus on the improvement of the material environment, but also on the improvement of the biological and social environment. It depends on the overall planning and management of the school, and also requires the proactive participation and maintenance of teachers.

4.4. Improve the evaluation mechanism of teacher professionalism

A sound evaluation mechanism is an important guarantee for the professional spirit of university teachers. Firstly, it is necessary to establish a regular evaluation system for the professional spirit of university teachers. The evaluation system is a comprehensive evaluation and review system for the professional ability, teaching adaptability, teacher charisma, and teacher influence of university teachers. In order to improve the quality of teachers and ensure the effectiveness of teacher professionalism, an

evaluation of teacher professionalism can be set up every semester or academic year, and the results of teacher evaluation can be summarized and fed back. Secondly, diversified evaluation methods should be adopted, which is an important principle of the teacher evaluation mechanism. Firstly, self-evaluation should be adopted to allow teachers to reflect and evaluate their profession, Have a clear understanding of their own problems or areas for improvement. Secondly, peer evaluation allows teachers to conduct mutual evaluations to understand the professional ethics and literacy of teachers that need to be evaluated. Finally, there is student evaluation, which allows students to objectively evaluate the profession they are engaged in and let teachers know the problems they face in the development of their professional spirit in the eyes of students. Thirdly, establish a sound reward system, and reward outstanding teachers based on their evaluation results during a semester or academic year. Corresponding material rewards, professional title promotion rewards, etc. can be given to outstanding teachers, urging them to continue maintaining their excellent professional spirit. At the same time, other teachers are also urged to learn from excellent teachers and cultivate a noble teaching professional spirit.

5. Conclusions

In summary, the professional spirit of teachers is a professional attitude and code of conduct that teachers must possess in their teaching work. The cultivation of the professional spirit of teachers should start from four aspects: guiding the professional spirit standards of teachers, strengthening the professional identity of university teachers, constructing a healthy ecological environment of universities, and improving the evaluation mechanism of the professional spirit of teachers. Setting standards is the primary condition for guiding the professional spirit of university teachers. The professional identity of university teachers is the core support for their professional spirit, the ecological environment of universities is an important support for their professional spirit, and a sound evaluation mechanism is an important guarantee for their professional spirit. These four aspects are important foundations for the development of their professional spirit, and are internal requirements for completing educational tasks and improving the quality of education and teaching. These four aspects support the cultivation of noble teaching professionalism and promote the professional development of teachers.

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