

Strategies for Improving the Quality of Teachers' Work and Life in Chinese Universities

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Abstract: *The society, schools and teachers should do something to improve the quality of college teachers' work and life. This paper introduces the connotation of the quality of working life, analyzes the main factors affecting the quality of teachers' working life, and puts forward the basic ways to improve the quality of teachers' working life. The aim of stabilizing teachers' mood and retaining talents is finally achieved by improving the quality of teachers' work and life.*

Keywords: *college teachers; Quality of working life; the status and countermeasures*

1. Introduction

Teaching quality, ability and evaluation have become a hot topic in the research on college teachers in China in the past decade. These studies reflect a series of problems in talent cultivation in Chinese colleges and universities, but something has been ignored like the working and living conditions of college teachers. The research report points out that: The quality of life of college teachers in China is lower than that of the Chinese people.^[1]From the perspective of the development of colleges and universities, the research on the quality of college teachers' work and life is conducive to enhancing the sense of responsibility and ownership of college teachers, so as to promote the efficient completion of school goals. On the other hand, it is conducive to maintaining the stability of college teachers and preventing the outflow of talents. Due to the lack of reliable measurement tools in the field of work life quality research in China, most of them refer to the maturity scale of foreign countries, and only modify the content of the scale in words. However, there are certain differences between countries in religious belief, cultural background and other aspects, so we should be cautious about the scale based on foreign background. In addition, Chinese scholars ignore the localization research of college teachers' working life quality, the measurement system of college teachers' working life quality and the selected indicators lack rationality. Therefore, it is a great practical significance to develop the local scale of college teachers' work life quality. Colleges and universities play an important role in the strategy of rejuvenating the country through science and education, and the quality of their teachers' work and life is an important factor affecting the quality of teaching and research work in colleges and universities.

2. Theoretical background

Quality of working life was first proposed in the late 1960s by Irving Bluestone, the union leader of General Motors. Empirical studies on the quality of working life began in the 1960s. The survey results show that employees care more about working life than career development. [2] Chinese scholars' empirical research on the quality of work and life started late. Zhu Yiling's investigation on the quality of work and life of educated women in colleges and universities found through quantitative analysis that Chinese educated women had high spiritual needs and high satisfaction, but their quality of life was not satisfaction. Generally speaking, domestic and foreign scholars have made some achievements in theoretical research, measurement method research and empirical research with job satisfaction as the core.

As for the connotation of the quality of working life, scholars put forward three views as follows: The first view is to regard the quality of working life as a process. American Vocational Training and Development Committee defines working life quality as: "Working life quality is a process for work organization, which enables members at all levels of the organization to actively participate in creating organizational environment, shaping organizational model, and producing organizational results."

The second view is that the quality of work and life is a management concept, and managers should carry out management based on people. "Quality of work life is a business philosophy," Carlson says. "It's what organizations are trying to achieve, and it varies from organization to organization, but it embodies the same idea -- respect for human dignity." Nadler and Lawler argue that "quality of work life is a way of thinking about employees, jobs, and organizations." The third view is that quality of work life is subjective. Fu proposed that the quality of work life is the satisfaction level of employees, and the quality of work life will be affected by fair remuneration, safe and healthy working conditions, job security and work content and other factors. Van believe that quality of work life includes not only work factors such as job satisfaction, but also non-work factors such as life satisfaction.

The above three viewpoints express the understanding of the concept of quality of work life from different angles with different emphases, which can be complementary to each other extent. However, according to the first view of the quality of work life understanding, it is difficult to measure from process; Second, the understanding of working life quality overlaps with organizational culture and atmosphere to some extent. Third, the subjective feelings of individuals. According to Luo Ruguo, quality of work life itself is a complex, abstract and multi-dimensional concept, which makes it difficult to define and elaborate accurately. It is precisely because the academic circles have different views on the connotation of work life quality that it is difficult to reach a unified understanding on measurement. This dilemma is also reflected in the measurement of college teachers' work and life quality. In China, the understanding and research on the quality of college teachers' work and life has gone through a development process from simple analysis to in-depth study, so many scholars have explained its definition from different perspectives. Zhao Shouying emphasized that the quality of teachers' work and life is to meet their needs for survival, safety, social contact and respect through school teaching, to achieve the completion of personal and school goals and achieve a higher level of self-realization. Luo Ruguo believes that the quality of teachers' work and life can be divided into broad and narrow sense. In micro perspective, teachers' quality of work and life refers to teachers' subjective feelings and evaluations of the overall situation of work and life, work characteristics, work environment, salary and welfare, organization and management, career promotion and professional development and other dimensions of work and life under certain material conditions. In macro-perspective, the quality of teachers' working life refers to the adequacy of working and living conditions provided by the society and the school for teachers and the satisfaction of teachers' working and living needs. Parsa proposes that the quality of work and life consists of seven needs: health and safety needs, economic and family needs, social needs, respect needs, self-actualization needs, knowledge needs and aesthetic needs. Toulabi believes that the quality of a teacher's working life is the result of all the decisions made by all members of the organization about their work themselves and the work environment

3. Analysis of quality factors of college teachers' work and life

The analysis of the status of college teachers' work and life quality reveals that "the need for survival" occupies an absolute proportion among the three elements, "the need for society" takes second place, "the need for self-realization" as the highest demand of human beings, ranks third in the satisfaction priority. "Salary, housing conditions, retirement and pension" play an important role in survival needs; among social needs, "the impact of work on marriage and the importance of organizations on QWL" are the most important. "Personal achievement and decision-making participation" are relatively important in the need for self-actualization. At the same time, the promotion system and the opportunity for further study also have a great impact on employees. There are the following factors:

(1) The generous salary provides teachers with a secure life, make more stronger sense of social superiority, stronger sense of personal achievement and self-confidence and stronger sense of loyalty and belonging to the organization.

(2) Housing and other welfare issues are important issues which affecting the stability of the teaching staff.

(3) The degree of freedom of work directly affects teachers' satisfaction and job performance. The democratic guidance of superior leaders can enhance teachers' satisfaction, but not necessarily improve their performance. The strong support from superior leaders to teachers can greatly enhance the satisfaction of employees.

(4) A good organizational atmosphere can enhance teachers' satisfaction and improve their

performance. The stronger the organization's ability to meet teachers' needs, the stronger the teachers' sense of satisfaction and dependence on the organization.

(5) The more teachers participate in high-level decision-making in their work, the more interested they are in their work and the higher their satisfaction will be.

(6) The less personal obstacles (lack of relevant knowledge and ability, conflict between work and family, etc.) and environmental obstacles (lack of cooperation, shortage of resources, etc.) teachers encounter in their work, the more motivated they are to work.

(7) Proper work arrangement, good promotion system and proper opportunities for further study can enhance teachers' work enthusiasm, improve their work development ability and make them more satisfied.

(8) Teachers' personal devotion to work can reduce their sense of loneliness and emptiness, and reduce the incidence of physical and mental diseases; And the organization attaches great importance to the cultivation of employee relationship, the teachers have a higher sense of satisfaction to the organization.

4. Measures to improve the quality of teachers' work and life in colleges and universities

4.1 Adhere to the people-oriented, the interests of teachers in an important position

It is an important way to improve QWL to put people first and pay attention to the interests of teachers. Therefore, we must make an effort to meet the needs and aspirations of teachers, understand the real needs of teachers, and satisfy more aspirations of teachers. Specifically including: (1) understanding the real needs of teachers, to meet the reasonable needs of teachers; (2) Give full consideration to teachers' views and positions; (3) To establish the idea that teachers are the masters of the school; (4) Give full consideration to teachers' future and career; (5) Create an atmosphere for teachers to challenge themselves; (6) Provide opportunities for teachers to develop themselves, surpass themselves and give full play to their potential, and help teachers to pursue excellence.

4.2 Implementing "teacher-centered" democratic management

School management should start from the nature and needs of teachers, attach importance to their social attributes and spiritual world, and advocate individual development, independent management and self-realization. To improve teacher QWL, we can start from the following aspects: (1) school affairs disclosure. Some of the school's important decisions concerning the vital interests of teachers should be made public as much as possible to increase transparency. (2) Flexible policies. Let teachers have more options and participation rights, allow teachers to take part-time jobs, and let teachers value their knowledge and skills. (3) Encourage participation in politics. We should give full play to the role of the secondary teaching congress and the trade union, encourage teachers to participate in politics and stimulate their spirit of ownership. (4) Improve the affinity of teachers. Schools should extend the tentacles of management to the personal life of teachers, care about their difficulties in family life, work emotions, pay attention to their behavior research, so as to mobilize the enthusiasm of teachers, enhance their sense of belonging to the school and affinity, enhance the cohesion of the school.

4.3 Establish "quality of Teachers' Work and Life" group

In order to improve teachers' QWL, it is necessary for the school to set up a "Teacher QWL" group. The group's responsibility is mainly to collect teachers' information about QWL and timely transfer it to relevant departments as the basis for improvement.^[3] However, the following principles should be followed in establishing the group: (1) The membership of the group should be entirely voluntary; (2) Establish vertical and horizontal "teacher QWL" groups to understand the needs of all levels and aspects; (3) The leader of the group can be the leader of the formal group or the leader of the informal group; (4) School leaders should strongly support the activities of the group, and recognize and reward the results of its activities.

4.4 Unimpeded channels of information communication

Information communication is an important condition for human survival. In schools, information communication plays a great role in collecting data, satisfying teachers' psychological needs, improving interpersonal relationships, arousing teachers' enthusiasm to participate in management and decision-making, and improving teachers' QWL. Therefore, reasonable formal communication channels should be established, especially the upward channel of information, so that teachers' opinions, suggestions, views and needs can be timely fed back to the top leaders.

4.5 Creating a comfortable, hygienic and safe working environment

An attractive working environment, both hard and soft, is one of the most important factors for teachers to feel secure in their work. Hard environment mainly refers to superior office conditions, advanced and complete teaching, scientific research, experimental equipment, clean and comfortable public places, good welfare benefits, rich and colorful recreational activities and so on. Soft environment including school good social reputation and considerable advantages and potential development, concerned about the teachers and understand the difficulties of collective leadership, let teachers' balanced development of all kinds of system, allocation of teachers who are interested in work, teachers' training and promotion opportunity, strong academic atmosphere, inspiring campus culture, school emotional investment, and so on. Suitable working environment, can make teachers' talent and enthusiasm to get perfect play, really get the meaning of life and fun from the work.

4.6 Relieve teachers' professional pressure and job burnout

Teachers' occupational stress and burnout not only seriously affect teachers' physical and mental health and hinder their professional development, but also affect the quality of education and teaching, endanger students' studies, and go against the development of students' physical and mental health and the formation of sound personality. Therefore, on the one hand, as individual teachers, they should clearly realize that job burnout mainly comes from their own work pressure, and should actively seek ways to alleviate it. For example, organize your work in an orderly way to make it more efficient; Constantly develop their own professional knowledge, improve their professional level and work ability; Usually communicate, exchange and cooperation with colleagues, and consult with others when things happen; Strengthen physical exercise, do the combination of work and rest, enhance their psychological bearing capacity and pressure ability, cultivate good personality quality. on the other hand, as a school, the school management personnel at various levels shall be the teachers create a loose environment of campus culture, democratic cooperation actively concerned about the teacher's life, help teachers to solve the difficulties in the practical life, coordination of teachers to establish good relationships, expectations of teachers' occupational role to establish reasonable, both to see the teacher in the past, now based on the teacher, more should be geared to the needs of teaching. Teachers' future, pay attention to teachers' future development, promote teachers' own continuous growth.

5. Conclusion

To sum up, in order to improve the quality of teachers' work and life, we must take practical measures to improve the quality of teachers' work and life from the strategic thinking, organizational guarantee, welfare conditions, management mode, organizational culture, working environment, working atmosphere and other aspects. In the final analysis, the competition of colleges and universities is the competition of talents, and the quality of college teachers' work and life directly affects the ability of colleges and universities to attract and retain talents, and also determines the development prospect of colleges and universities and their position in the society. In addition, the "quality of work life" is a dynamic index, is also a can improve the indicators, by trying to throw people in colleges and universities should effectively improve teachers' quality of working life, achieve the goal of human resource development and management, achieve organizational efficiency goals, together with the teachers' interests to better cultivate more useful talents for our country construction.

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