

## Research Article

### A Probe into Psychological Training for Professionalization Development of College Teachers

Yong Zhao

Department of Ideological and Political Education, North China Institute of Water Conservancy and Hydroelectric Power, Zheng Zhou 450011, China

**Abstract:** In this study, we have a probe into psychological training for professionalization development of college teachers. Professional quality is the key element of the quality structure of teachers as well as a major indicator of the professionalized level of teachers. The development of teacher professionalization is influenced by personal factors, school factors, governments' educational policies, the society's cognition and location of teachers' roles and many other factors; the dominant influencing factors under the specific conditions in different periods are various and we shall understand the main factors influencing the development of professionalization under specific conditions to promote the professional development of teachers. With the acceleration of social development, psychological factors, among the personal factors come to play a supporting and dominating role in the development of teacher professionalization, which influence the speed and professionalized level of teachers' professionalization development. Therefore, the exploration and research into the establishment of a psychological training system in the professionalization development of college teachers is of vital importance for the development of teacher professionalization.

**Keywords:** College teachers, professionalization, psychology

#### INTRODUCTION

“Education is the foundation for the cultivation of talents and the enhancement of national innovative capability as well as the basis and support for social development”. At present, education is moving towards the forefront of history in the profound reform of the modernization process and is playing a vital role of unprecedented importance. Meanwhile, the quality and professionalization development of teachers, as the implementers and facilitators of education, has become a noticeable topic in educational reform and it is especially so in present “people-oriented” days of 21<sup>st</sup> century when the development of teacher professionalization is being re-located.

Professionalization of college teachers is an important symbol of modern educational development, while college teachers are force at the core to strengthen the country relying on education; professionalization of college teachers is the key to the improvement of the teaching quality of higher education and the level of professionalization degree of college teachers determines fundamentally the quality of higher education and influences the success or failure of higher education; the question how to realize professionalization is at the same time a theoretical one and a practical one. The exploration into the professionalization development of teachers has significant influence on the exploration of all countries

worldwide into the professionalization development of teachers. With the competition becoming more and more severe, pressure of all kinds becomes greater and greater as well, which influences the psychology of teachers to certain degree and even directly affects the educational effects and teaching effects of teachers. Lu (2010) has a research into professionalization development stages of college teachers. Xu (2002) have a brief discussion on American professional development schools. Peter (2006) studies the fifth discipline: the art & practice of the learning organization. Shi (2009) analyze how to improve psychological quality of teachers, data of culture and education. Zhang and Junxia (2001) study the cultivation of teachers' ability for psychological education. Wang (2002) have a research and overview of mental health education in china for the recent decade.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, good psychological quality is an important symbol of the quality of teachers. In the development process of teacher professionalization, good psychological quality is a core element as well. The development of teachers' psychological quality and professionalization is of vital importance for the development of the educational career and the students and of even greater importance for their own professionalization development. The level of the psychological quality of teachers affects directly the professionalization development of teachers and their

own quality, teaching attitude, learnt knowledge, teaching ability, teaching achievements, etc. Therefore, it is an indispensable pre-condition for the professionalization development of teachers to improve their psychological quality.

In this study, we have a probe into psychological training for professionalization development of college teachers. Professional quality is the key element of the quality structure of teachers as well as a major indicator of the professionalized level of teachers. The development of teacher professionalization is influenced by personal factors, school factors, governments' educational policies, the society's cognition and location of teachers' roles and many other factors; the dominant influencing factors under the specific conditions in different periods are various and we shall understand the main factors influencing the development of professionalization under specific conditions to promote the professional development of teachers. With the acceleration of social development, psychological factors, among the personal factors come to play a supporting and dominating role in the development of teacher professionalization, which influence the speed and professionalized level of teachers' professionalization development. Therefore, the exploration and research into the establishment of a psychological training system in the professionalization development of college teachers is of vital importance for the development of teacher professionalization.

#### **EVOLVEMENT OF PROFESSIONALIZATION DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHERS BOTH HOME AND ABROAD**

Regarding the defining of the connotation of teacher professionalization, there are multiple opinions. According to Hammond, profession is composed of three basic elements: professional knowledge, special techniques and strong sense of mission and responsibility. In the sense of sociology, "professionalization" refers to the process that a common occupational group gradually gets to correspond with professional standards, becomes a specialized profession and obtains a corresponding professional status in a certain period Lu (2010). In terms of the understanding of teacher professionalization, scholars believe that "teacher professionalization is a professional development process that a teacher acquires professional educational knowledge and techniques, implements professional independence, performs professional morality, gradually improves his or her teaching quality and becomes a good professional educational worker through lifelong professional training in his or her professional career. In

another word, it is the process of professional development from common people to educationist".

In 1986, American Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy brought up in a report entitled as *Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*: the best environment for the preparation for teacher profession is a clinical practice school associating colleges and universities with primary and secondary schools. In the same year, Holmes introduced the concept "Professional Development School" and he pointed out those student teachers, university teaching and research staff and primary and secondary teachers shall establish a link of partnership and take joint efforts to improve the quality and standard of teaching and learning. Xu (2002) Teacher professionalization means that teacher profession has its own unique professional requirements and professional conditions as well as dedicated training and management systems. The professionalism of teachers includes subject professionalism and educational professionalism and the nation's considerations for appointment of teachers not only include stipulated educational background standards but also requirements on high educational knowledge, ability and professional ethics. Professionalization development of teachers is an ongoing process and teacher professionalization is also a concept of development, being both a kind of state and a continuously deepening process.

Since it came to 1980s, professional development of teachers has become a focus point of people's attention and one of the hot issues in modern educational reform. Teacher profession is a kind of specialized profession, which has undergone a historical development process. Since the reform and opening up, our government has always been dedicated to the improvement of teachers' professional status and the development of teacher professionalization. In Teachers Law, which was started to be executed in 1994, it is provided that "teachers are professional people who perform the duties of education and teaching" and this is the first time in our history of education that the professional status of teachers has been recognized from the legal point of view (Peter, 2006). In 1995, the State Council promulgated the Measures for the Implementation of Teachers' Qualification and the teachers' qualification system began to be executed nationwide. Classification Directory of Occupations of People's Republic of China, the first authorized document to make scientific classification on occupations and published by our country in 2000, classify the occupations in our country into eight major categories for the first time and teacher belongs to the category "professional technical people", which indicates that the professional problem regarding the teacher occupation has become a conclusion.

Professional development of teachers is the key for the implementation of new curriculum. Since 1980s when the theory of professional development of teachers won the emphasis of all, normal colleges and schools, teacher training institutes, teachers' schools have all been carrying out teacher educational work on the basis of it. Professional development of teachers is an educational and teaching research topic manifested under the drive of occupational "professionalization" and since after the middle of 1990s, an upsurge of research into the professional development problem of teachers rises in our circle of educational theories. By 2001, Ye Lan, among other scholars concluded that "on the whole, the research into professional development of teachers has matured" (Zhu, 1995).

America is the country where mental health education originates and where the mental health education system is most perfected and its mental health education can be dated back to the 19th century. In American psychological field, Witmer. L has always been considered as the first practitioner of school psychology in America and in 1896, he set up the first clinic in American University of Pennsylvania and founded the first school of hospital mode-University of Oregon, hence setting a precedent in America that provides services for education with psychology. Shi (2009) In 1946, two important specialized organizations are founded in America: School Psychology Branch of American Psychology Association (APA) and National Association of School Psychologist (NASP), which played a positive role in promoting the development of American school psychology. To some extent, it can be said that the mental health education of America has been provided with a set of quite matured systems and has shaped a kind of ambience with care from the entire society.

School mental health education is part of modern school education in the educational system of countries all over the world and China is no exception. China's mental health education, which features a late start, came into being in 1980s and gradually grew up since after, winning universal attention in 1990s. It can be seen from the present school education and teaching practice that the mental health status of Chinese adolescent students is not so optimistic and the guidance from teachers of excellent psychological quality is required; therefore, higher requirements rise for teachers: they can only satisfy the needs during teaching and provide better guidance in students' life and learning if they cultivate their own psychological quality while undergoing professionalization development.

Psychological education is a kind of education that develops good psychological quality of educators, improves their psychological function, takes into full play their psychological potentiality and facilitates their

personality development, as well as a process of social activity in which educators interact with the educates' autonomous construction of psychology. Professor Lin Chongde defines psychological quality of teachers as: "the sum of psychological qualities teachers show in educational activities, which determine the education and teaching effects and have direct and notable influence on the physical and mental development of students" (Zhang and Junxia, 2001).

Teaching is always educational and contents of psychological education can be seen everywhere in pedagogy and shall be permeated into the teaching process without losing any opportunities. We can know from psychological knowledge that our harmful stimulus, e.g., tight relationship between teachers and students, sarcasm of teachers to students, etc., can influence the sentiments of students or even greatly do harm to the students' mental health.

Education is both a science and an art. Exploration into the psychological factors in pedagogy is made from the viewpoint of educates without exception. In the teaching process, teachers are the dominant factors and shall refer to these factors in teaching activities and pay more attention to the students' feeling in teaching activities, so as to promote the interactive process of teaching and learning fundamentally. In the development from the focus on the external environment for the professionalization development of teachers and the recognition of the society for professionalization to the improvement of inherent quality of teacher professionalization, the process from emphasis on professionalization development of teacher groups to the concerns for the professionalization development of teacher individuals and the transformation from attention to teaching results to the emphasis on the training on thoughts and psychological aspects of teachers, the psychological quality and the level of bearing ability of teachers themselves has a direct influence on the teaching results.

Therefore, the psychological training of teachers has become an indispensable lesson in the process of professionalization development of teachers; in order to better improve teaching quality and achieve optimal teaching results, the development of teachers shall be strengthened and at present, the most important task is to strengthen and perfect the psychological training system of teachers and to build a comprehensive psychological training system for the professionalization development of teachers.

#### **SUGGESTIONS OF PROFESSIONALIZATION DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHERS**

We shall take the self-evaluation of teachers as the breakthrough point to allow teachers get a correct

understanding of their own roles, develop education and teaching cases to allow teachers to find out the problems arisen in the education and teaching process and carry out research-based teaching to facilitate the professionalization development of teachers.

Based on the problems existing in our professionalization development of teachers and the international trend of professionalization development of teachers, we shall promote the professionalization development from the following aspects under the highly developed informational social environment:

**Establish a learning system and expand the range of knowledge:** Teachers shall improve and perfect themselves through various learning modes and establish the notion of lifelong learning. The self-evaluation of Stephen Covey can probably offer some inspiration for teachers; he said: it is impossible for you to become a person with right behaviors overnight, since to become a person with right behaviors is a self-renewal process lasting for a lifetime. His words indicate that teachers shall try to “absorb” while generously “giving”, turn “teaching” to “learning” and change periodical “recharge” to all-process and lifelong learning.

**Promote the renewal of teachers’ education and teaching theories:** The educational concepts of teachers shall update and change with the social development and progress.

**Emphasize the participation of international educational resources:** With the rapid informational development, education is also developing synchronously; we shall absorb the essence of international educational resources and abandon their scum so as to achieve a harmony with international development.

**Provide the admission conditions for teaching profession:** The knowledge level of teachers can have direct influence on the quality and standard of students they cultivate, therefore, the admission conditions shall be provided clearly for teachers.

**Improve the treatment for teaching profession:** To improve the treatment for teaching profession is an effective way to release and lighten the pressure for teachers caused by various reasons as well as to facilitate the professionalization process of teachers.

#### **PROSPECT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAINING SYSTEM**

Presently, mankind has entered the era of knowledge and information and the economy, science

and technology is developing rapid. The integration of scientific development, the globalization of economy, the harmonization of natural sciences and human social sciences, the significant strengthening of the comprehensive national strength in all countries and the intensity of competition have brought up newer, higher and more comprehensive requirements for the psychological quality of people.

Psychological education is a kind of practical activity as an important way to develop educators of good psychological quality, as well as a process to improve the psychological quality of educates, take into full play their psychological potentiality and facilitate their personality development and a process of social practical educational activity in which educators interact with the educates’ autonomous construction of psychology. The level of psychological quality can directly influence the result of education and teaching; therefore, the foundation of education shall lie in the education on psychological quality so as for the educational capacity of teachers to meet the requirements of educational activities. “The psycho-educational capacity is the sum of the individual psychological characteristics of teachers that meet the requirements of psycho-educational activities and affect the efficiency of psychological education and psycho-educational capacity is the core component of educational capacity.” Zhu (1992) Good psychological quality is an important part of the comprehensive quality of a person as well as an indispensable content of talent quality.

Currently, many scholars have raised specific standards regarding mental health, all of which vary. “According to mental health scholar Abe•Arkoff, the standards of mental health include 9 items: happiness; harmony; self-importance; personal growth; personal maturity; personal integrated nature; maintenance of good contact with environment; effective adaption to environment; self-independence in environment” (Wang, 2002).

Huang Jianhou (1976), a scholar from Taiwan holds that there are four standards for mental health: willingness to work; ability to build harmonious relationship with others; appropriate understanding of oneself; good contact with actual environment. American psychologist A. Maslow and Mittelman put forward ten standards which are considered as classical:

- Sufficient self sense of security
- Full understanding of oneself and proper valuation of one’s own capacity
- Practicalness of living objective
- No separation from actual environment
- Ability to maintain completeness and harmony of personality

- Possession of ability to learn from experience
- Ability to maintain good interpersonal relationship
- Ability to properly release and control one's sentiments
- Ability to do limited play of individuality
- Appropriate fulfillment of basic personal needs without violating social norms

The mental health standards in Chinese traditional culture mainly include the following aspects:

- Good interpersonal relationship
- Proper control of one's own words and deeds
- Maintenance of the balance and stability of sentiments
- Correct understanding of the surroundings
- Positive living attitude
- Perfect self-development objective

Since mental health education entered into schools of all levels and all types in 1980s, all schools have been carrying out mental health education and teaching work, which presents a thriving scene. In 1982, Beijing Normal University built the first center for psychological measurement and consulting service. Since after, psychological counseling agencies were set up in over 70 colleges and universities in Shanghai, Xi'an, Hangzhou, Changchun, etc., successively. By the end of 1990, Professional Committee of Psychological Consulting for College Students, the first professional organization of psychological consulting for college students in mainland China, was announced established and it provides support for counseling agencies to guide and treat the disorders and obstacles in the psychology of college students.

It has been proven by practice: to improve the psychological quality of teacher groups is the requirement for fulfilling a good job in the construction of teacher groups and to enable them to master the knowledge ability and knowledge system required for psychological health education is an important condition to ensure the normal development of psychological health education and teaching work.

Teachers shall enhance teachers' learning of theoretical knowledge on psychology. Teachers shall influence and educate students with their own excellent psychological quality and plays an exemplary role for them. Therefore, they shall strengthen the training of their noble moral sentiments and spiritual realm and equip themselves with high sense of responsibility and entrepreneur spirit.

Teachers shall establish a strong psychological educational awareness. They shall have their own subjective need to carry out psychological education and get a comprehensive knowledge of the position and roles of psychological education in the educational system.

To improve the psychological quality of teachers is a systematic project, governments and education authorities of all levels, schools, communities and various circles of society shall provide vigorous support of the psychological education of teachers; school leaders shall support and show care for the psychological quality of teachers; and teachers themselves shall have the awareness to improve their own psychological quality and master effective ways to correctly adjust their own psychology. It is strongly believed that the psychological health and psychological quality of teachers will see great improvement and perfection through the supports of all and the joint efforts of numerous teachers.

## CONCLUSION

In this study, we have a probe into psychological training for professionalization development of college teachers. With our research, we shall understand the main factors influencing the development of professionalization under specific conditions to promote the professional development of teachers. With the acceleration of social development, psychological factors, among the personal factors come to play a supporting and dominating role in the development of teacher professionalization, which influence the speed and professionalized level of teachers' professionalization development. Therefore, the exploration and research into the establishment of a psychological training system in the professionalization development of college teachers is of vital importance for the development of teacher professionalization.

## REFERENCES

- Lu, Y., 2010. Research into Professionalization development stages of college teachers. *J. Yangzhou University Higher Education Study* Edition, 14(4).
- Peter, S., 2006. *The Fifth Discipline: The Art & Practice of the Learning Organization*. Currency, Utd., States, ISBN: 0-385-51725-4.
- Shi, G., 2009. *How to Improve Psychological Quality of Teachers*. *Data o Culture Educ.*, Vol. 03.
- Wang, F., 2002. Research and overview of mental health education in china for the recent decade. *Theory Pract. Educ.*, 22(7).

- Xu, J., 2002. Brief discussion on american professional development schools [J]. *Stud. Foreign Educ.*, Vol. 3.
- Zhang, M. and G. Junxia, 2001. On the cultivation of teachers' ability for psychological education. *J. Tangshan Teach. College*, 23(4).
- Zhu, J., 1992. *Health Psychology: Mental Health*. Wunan Book Publishing Co. Ltd., Taiwan.
- Zhu, Y., 1995. Status and trends of psychology development in foreign schools [J]. *Comp. Educ. Rev.*, 3: 12-17.