

Reflections on Several Issues of Teaching Reform in Colleges and Universities

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ABSTRACT

Teaching reform is the core of university reform and the only way to promote the healthy development of higher education in China in the new era. Therefore, it is necessary to deeply understand the significance of university teaching reform, face up to the problems existing in the process of university teaching reform. By improving the quality of talent cultivation in universities through reforms including teaching concept, teaching content, teaching pattern, teacher team, and teaching evaluation system, the universities should make due contributions to the construction of a socialist modernized country and the realization of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

Keywords: *Universities, Teaching reform, Issues, Reflections.*

1. INTRODUCTION

History has shown that the prosperity of education leads to the prosperity of a country, and the strength of education leads to the strength of a country. In today's era of rapid development of science and technology and the rapid transformation of scientific and technological achievements, in order to take the initiative in the fierce international competition, countries around the world are paying more attention to the development of their own education, especially the important role of higher education in personnel training. As a developing country, it is more important and urgent to accelerate the development of education, especially higher education, in order to realize the transformation from a country with large population and resources to a country with strong human resources. Based on this, in order to effectively support the implementation of the national strategy of rejuvenating the country through science and education and the strategy of innovation-driven development, and to serve the goal and task requirements of building a modern socialist country and realizing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, universities and colleges must constantly explore the development law of higher education in the new era, innovate the talent training mode, and promote the healthy

development of higher education through continuous promotion of teaching reform.

2. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF TEACHING REFORM IN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

The development practice of higher education shows that the development of higher education cannot be achieved overnight, nor can it be a one-time solution. It should continue to develop and progress with the development of the times and social progress. To achieve this goal, teaching reform must be carried out.

2.1 *It Is Conducive to Improving the Teaching Quality of Universities*

Teaching work is the central task of universities, so higher education reform mainly revolves around the teaching work. Through teaching reform, universities should establish and further consolidate the teaching concept of teacher-led and student-centered; continuously enrich teaching content and form; fully stimulate teachers' enthusiasm for carrying out teaching activities; actively mobilize students' initiative in learning, and continuously promote the improvement of teaching quality.

2.2 It Is Conducive to Improving the Quality of Talent Cultivation of Universities

Cultivating excellent talents for the country and society is an important mission and task of universities, as well as an important indicator to measure the significance and value of their existence. Due to the fact that universities must determine their talent cultivation direction based on the needs of the country and society, it is necessary for universities to continuously carry out teaching reform in response to these needs. By adjusting their professional settings, curriculum arrangements, teaching content, teacher allocation, and other elements, universities constantly optimize the quality of talent cultivation.

2.3 It Is Conducive to Improving the Educational Level of Universities

Continuously improving the educational level is a necessary prerequisite for universities to survive and develop in fierce competition, and therefore has become an important source of motivation for teaching reform. If the universities has a high level of education, then there will be sufficient guarantee for high-quality teachers and students, otherwise, it will inevitably deteriorate and become precarious. Therefore, real efforts must be put into teaching reform, through which universities should strive to optimize the combination of teaching resource elements and play a positive role in continuously improving the educational level.

3. ISSUES ON THE TEACHING REFORM OF COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

The reform of higher education in our country has been continuously advancing with the pace of reform and opening up, and deepening in the historical process of transitioning from elite education to mass education. As the top priority of higher education reform, the teaching reform in universities has been continuously promoted and deepened, and has achieved great success. However, it should also be soberly recognized that there are many urgent problems that need to be solved in the process of teaching reform in universities, mainly manifested in the following aspects.

3.1 Further Deepening the Understanding and Implementation of Modern Teaching Concepts

In the process of teaching and talent cultivation in higher education institutions, the role of concepts is indispensable. With the development of reform and opening up, the concept of teaching reform has had an important impact on the practice of teaching reform in universities, playing a guiding role. Among them, the concepts such as quality education, general education, and innovative education have laid the theoretical foundation for the reform of the teaching system and the development of teaching practice in Chinese universities. [1] However, at the same time, there are also great differences in the understanding and implementation of these educational concepts in higher education to varying degrees, especially in how to implement them in practice. In other words, the further development of higher education requires us to further deepen our understanding and implementation of modern teaching concepts.

3.2 Further Enriching the Teaching Content and Methods of Universities

The core of educational reform is teaching reform, while the core of teaching reform is the reform of teaching content and methods. In fact, the teaching content and curriculum system of Chinese higher education institutions were mainly established in the early 1950s based on the Soviet higher education model, which is not only essential but also necessary. This model has indeed played a huge role in the development of higher education in China. However, after half a century of development, especially after the reform and opening up, with the transformation of Chinese society, the original teaching content, curriculum system, and background of teaching methods have undergone profound changes, which requires universities to reform them in response to these changes. Although we have achieved great success through teaching reform, the modernization, internationalization, universalization, and popularization of teaching content still need to be further strengthened. From the perspective of teaching methods, teaching methods serve as intermediaries of communication between teaching and learning activities, and play a role as a “bridge” and “ship” in achieving educational goals. Over the years, with the unremitting efforts of educators, a large number of teaching methods including case study, discussion, heuristic method, etc. have

emerged in universities and achieved remarkable teaching results. However, the promotion, popularization, and integration of these teaching methods still need further improvement. That is to say, the teaching content and methods of higher education should be further enriched, optimized, and improved.

3.3 Further Improving the Assessment and Evaluation Mechanism for Teachers and Students

Since the reform and opening up, with the construction and development of higher education in China, especially the rapid expansion on the scale of higher education since the late 1990s, the quality of higher education has increasingly attracted widespread attention from our country and society. The government and universities have made many positive efforts in ensuring and improving the quality of higher education and establishing a quality assurance system for higher education. As far as colleges and universities are concerned, the quality of education is undoubtedly the lifeline of the school. Therefore, a series of systems such as teaching evaluation system, teaching supervision system, teaching reward system, and examination system have been successively introduced. The introduction of these systems undoubtedly plays a positive and significant role in ensuring the quality of education of universities. In the meanwhile, it should also be noted that the assessment and evaluation mechanisms for teachers and students are not yet sound enough. For example, the assessment and evaluation of teachers' teaching and scientific research workload, the process assessment of students, and so on need further clarification and improvement.

4. RESEARCH ON THE PATH OF TEACHING REFORM IN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

The fundamental task of higher education is to cultivate talents, and its development must rely on reform. Therefore, the goal and task of higher education reform is to closely focus on continuously improving the level of education and enhancing the quality of talent cultivation. Based on this, higher education reform should concentrate on the following aspects.

4.1 Stressing the Reform of Reaching Concept

Teaching concept refers to people's attitudes and basic views towards teaching activities. Practice has shown that because teaching concept has extremely important and clear guiding significance for teaching activities, the reform of teaching concept should be at the forefront. For a long time, there has been a debate over the concept of teaching as the main or auxiliary approach in colleges and universities: the teaching-oriented party believes that schools are places for teaching and nurturing students, so teaching should be the main focus; The side who regards teaching as a supplement believes that school evaluation and promotion are based on scientific research achievements, so teaching should be used as a supplement. On the surface, this may seem like a debate between educators over different teaching concepts, but in reality, it is a debate sparked by the teaching concepts held by the school authorities. The reason for this is that whether it is the competition between schools for excellence, or the evaluation and promotion of teachers are based on scientific research results, and teaching plays an extremely secondary role in this process, which is almost negligible. Therefore, it is impossible for both schools and teachers to devote a lot of time and energy to teaching work. Over time, it will inevitably seriously affect the level of school running and the quality of personnel training. Over time, it will inevitably seriously affect the school's level of education and the quality of talent cultivation. Based on this, it is necessary to attach great importance to the reform of teaching concept in universities, give full recognition and effective guarantee to teaching work in terms of institutional mechanisms, encourage and guide teachers to devote their main time and energy to teaching work. Only in this way can the school truly put the "main" of teaching into practice, and continuously improve the teaching quality and talent cultivation quality.

4.2 Highly Strengthening the Reform of Teaching Content

Textbooks, as important tools for university teachers to carry out teaching activities, are important carriers of teaching content, and are also the main basis for evaluating whether teachers' teaching activities comply with norms. With the development of the times and the progress of society, the teaching content of textbooks should

have professional authority, academic frontiers, and practical relevance. From the perspective of professional authority, textbooks must be compiled by authoritative figures in the field, and published and distributed by authoritative publishing departments. From the perspective of academic frontiers, textbook content must absorb new achievements and reflect new developments and trends in the discipline. From the perspective of practical relevance, it is not only necessary to focus on the practical problems of the country and society, but also to consider the actual situation of students, as it involves the direction of talent cultivation. Although universities do have various differences in teaching content due to different disciplines and courses offered, the requirements for teaching content to reflect professional authority, academic frontiers, and practical relevance are consistent. That is to say, consistency should never be ignored due to differences, and timely updates of teaching content should not be compromised. In general, universities must attach great importance to the reform of teaching content, and adhere to integrity and innovation. On the one hand, universities should firmly adhere to the correct attributes, characteristics of the discipline, because without them, teaching will deviate from the correct positioning of the discipline. On the other hand, universities must also firmly adhere to timely review and absorption of new viewpoints, judgments, and ideas, constantly enrich and develop teaching content, because the complacency will inevitably lag behind the times, and the ignorance of social reality will inevitably lose its meaning and value of existence.

4.3 Attaching Great Importance to the Reform of Teaching Pattern

The traditional teaching pattern refers to the teacher being the subject and center of teaching activities throughout the entire teaching process, while students are the object and audience. This teaching pattern usually includes organizing teaching, reviewing old lessons, explaining new lessons, consolidating new lessons, and assigning homework. Objectively speaking, the traditional teaching pattern has many advantages, such as the professionalism of teacher quality, the planning of teaching, the systematicity of knowledge transmission, the completeness of content presentation, and so on. These advantages have been tested through practice, accumulated over time, and are also effective. However, it must also be noted that the traditional teaching pattern has their

limitations, such as classes almost wholly talked by teachers, low student participation in teaching, relatively limited classroom information, restricted interaction and communication between teachers and students, and so on. Furthermore, with the development of the times and the progress of society, students' independence and autonomy continue to increase. In addition, the diversity of channels for students to obtain various information makes it difficult for traditional teaching pattern to independently and efficiently respond to students' diverse knowledge needs. In this situation, universities must reform their teaching models and organically combine traditional teaching forms with modern teaching forms, that is, to combine the teacher as the leading and the student as the main body. In other words, under the premise of consolidating teacher's leading, students' subject status, role, and goals should be highlighted, both of which are indispensable. Taking students as the main body is to highlight the autonomy of students' learning, that is, autonomous learning, which is also known as self-regulated learning, and generally refers to the process in which learners consciously determine learning goals, choose learning methods, monitor the learning process, and evaluate learning outcomes. [2] In fact, it must be pointed out that students' autonomous learning is not completely unrelated to teachers but a two-way teaching activity driven by both teachers and students, with teachers as the main body and students as the main body, using innovative thinking and methods. In this process, the leading role of teachers is mainly reflected in the direction control, content guidance, process evaluation, and result assessment of students' autonomous learning activities. In a word, the teacher-led and student-centered teaching form can not only mobilize the enthusiasm of both teachers and students, but also improve the timeliness of teaching.

4.4 Enhancing the Reform of the Teaching Team

Although the teaching models in universities are constantly advancing and inspiring new effectiveness, no matter how they are changed, the leading role of teachers in teaching activities cannot be replaced, because teachers not only bear the responsibility of imparting knowledge and solving doubts, but also the responsibility of educating and nurturing students. The education plan should be teacher-oriented, and high-quality higher education requires a first-class teaching team. Universities should establish a teacher-oriented service

philosophy, attracting talents while retaining them. It is necessary for universities to intensify the construction of the teaching staff, form a reasonable structure to cultivate and attract talents. Also the people-oriented concept should be implemented in all aspects of work. Only when universities have established such a consciousness can we truly implement the good atmosphere of respecting knowledge, respecting talents, and cherishing talents in all aspects of work, and create a good atmosphere and environment for gathering, attracting, and cultivating talents. In the meanwhile, higher demands must be placed on teachers, and universities “need to strengthen the construction of teacher ethics and teaching style, so that teachers have noble virtues, excellent teaching capacity, and professional dedication.” [3] In the construction of teaching teams, it is vital to adhere to the employment orientation of “having both moral integrity and ability”, and always put the requirement for “moral integrity” first. Universities should strictly control the import and export of the teaching staff, absorb the fittest and retain talents with good moral character, strong professional ability and love of education, while removing those with low moral character, weak professional ability and do not love education from the teaching staff. Only thus can the professional progressiveness and ideological purity of the teaching staff maintain, which will create the best premise for the development of higher education.

4.5 Great Emphasis on the Reform of the Teaching Assessment and Evaluation Mechanism

As a standard for measuring the performance of teachers and students, the teaching assessment and evaluation mechanism is directly related to the vital interests of teachers and students, and therefore directly affects the enthusiasm, initiative, and creativity of teachers and students. From the perspective of teacher evaluation, it is not only necessary to combine student evaluation, supervisory evaluation, leadership evaluation, and peer evaluation, but also to combine historical evaluation with practical evaluation. Only in this way can we achieve maximum relative fairness and safeguard the legitimate interests of teachers. From the perspective of student evaluation, the first step is to diversify the evaluation methods. That is to break the single and traditional student evaluation, adopt multiple evaluation methods, and explore scientific and flexible evaluation methods such as written exam, open-book exam, experimental

operation, design, research, and investigation are used for evaluation. Secondly, the evaluation content should be diversified. Evaluation should not only focus on students’ academic performance, but also on the development of their innovative spirit and practical abilities, as well as their psychological health, learning interests, and emotional experiences. It also should aim at knowledge, abilities, and qualities, reflecting the organic combination and unity of the three. Finally, the evaluation process should be dynamic. It is necessary to change the “one hammer” style of final or annual evaluation of student performance, and to combine the summative evaluation with the formative evaluation, and to implement dynamic evaluation. In other words, we should attach importance to the process assessment and evaluation of student performance, eliminate randomness as much as possible, and reflect authenticity and accuracy.

5. CONCLUSION

To sum up, the development of the times and the progress of society require teaching reform in higher education. Therefore, it is necessary to constantly explore the development laws of higher education in the new era, innovate talent training models, and make due contributions to the goal and task of building a socialist modernized country and realizing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

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