

Investigation and Analysis of the Present Teaching Situation of College Teachers

From the Perspective of the Scholarship Theory of Teaching and Learning*

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Abstract—A self-designed questionnaire was used to investigate 327 teachers in 67 universities in China. The results show that 86.43% of the teachers surveyed had 7-12 teaching hours per week or more; 58.1% of the teachers believe that most of their colleagues around them had a strong sense of responsibility for teaching; 67.38% of the teachers are willing to engage in teaching research. However, 82.57% of the teachers think that the content of the current title evaluation is still on scientific research achievements, and 75.23% of the teachers think that the conditions of teachers' evaluation and optimization are also on scientific research achievements. It can be seen that there is still a situation that universities attach more importance to scientific research than to teaching. It is suggested that university teaching should be re-positioned and given its academic status. More measures should be taken simultaneously to promote the development of the scholarship of teaching and learning of teachers.

Keywords—scholarship of teaching and learning; college teachers; generative-instructional professors

I. INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of the 19th century, Humboldt University in Germany put forward the idea of "unification of teaching and research", introduces scientific research into universities, and expands the functions. However, with the prevalence of instrumentalism in the world, the scientific research function of universities has attracted more and more attention, and the teaching function has been gradually weakened. It has become a common international phenomenon that universities attach more importance to scientific research than to teaching. Against this background, Ernest Boyer, former chairman of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching in the United States, put forward a new academic concept in 1990. Academic research should include discovered scholarship, comprehensive scholarship, applied scholarship and scholarship of teaching and learning. The new academic concept covers all the work of teachers. He believes that the key to eliminate the dualistic

opposition between scientific research and teaching and improve the quality of undergraduate education is not to do less scientific research and do more teaching, but to orientate university teaching academically and make university teaching become the scholarship of teaching. Lee Shulman, the current chairman of Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching in the United States, further points out that teaching can become the scholarship of teaching because of it liking research. It requires teachers to systematically explore, analyze and accept peer reviews on specific teaching issues in the process of teaching. The scholarship of teaching and learning is also open, able to face comments and evaluations, and can be constructed by others. That is to say, university teaching has the general characteristics of academic work, namely, "clear objectives, adequate preparation, appropriate methods, remarkable results, effective expression, and reflective criticism". [1] Since then, scholars in the United States have made extensive and profound discussions on university scholarship of teaching and learning from different perspectives, and have published a series of books and articles. University scholarship of teaching and learning has not only become a topic of extensive discussion, but also has been practiced by many universities actively. Taking Boyer's concept of the scholarship of teaching and learning as the starting point, and with the promotion of Shulman and others, the United States has gradually formed a university academic movement of teaching and learning with the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching as the core. "The academic movement of teaching and learning in American universities is a movement centered on 'regarding teaching as a kind of scholarship of teaching' and aimed at 'changing biased evaluation and reward system of college teachers and improving the quality of undergraduate teaching'. It combines ideas with practice." [2]

The popularization of higher education in China has brought about a contradiction between the quality and quantity of education, which has caused widespread concern about the quality of higher education. In higher education, there is also a negative tendency of "emphasizing scientific research and neglecting teaching". The evaluation of teachers' work mainly depends on scientific research results, which makes teachers' time and energy spent in teaching, not

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receive due attention and recognition. This is also one of the reasons for the decline of the overall quality of higher education. Based on the similarity between Chinese higher education at this time and American higher education at that time, domestic scholars actively look for solutions, turn their eyes to the United States, and begin to study and discuss the academic thoughts of teaching and related theories. Although Boyer has not clearly defined the connotation of scholarship of teaching and learning, the view that "the scholarship of teaching and learning is closely related to excellent teaching and scholarly teaching" has been accepted by many scholars. The author believes that the scholarship of teaching and learning is based on excellent teaching practice, reflect on and study teaching problems constantly, and is a process of forming innovative achievements and making them theoretical and open. The formation and development of the scholarship of teaching and learning cannot be separated from teaching practice, and reflection and study on teaching problems. It is a wise and effective measure to improve the quality of education in colleges and universities by

encouraging teachers to improve the scholarship of teaching and teaching. To this end, the research team has jointly compiled the "Questionnaire for the Evaluation of Teachers' Professional Titles in Colleges and Universities" (Questionnaire Star website: <http://www.sojump.com/jq/4161714.aspx>). Relevant investigations have been carried out from the aspects of teaching practice and teaching research willingness of college teachers.

II. INVESTIGATION OBJECTS AND METHODS

These respondents cover 327 college teachers at different levels. It is more in line with the current situation of teachers' structure in universities of China in terms of gender, teaching age, professional title, educational background and subject structure. From the basic information of the respondents (see "Table I" below), it can better reflect the real situation of Chinese college teachers in teaching.

TABLE I. BASIC INFORMATION OF THE RESPONDENTS

Essential Information		Number of People	Proportion
Gender	Male	157	48.01%
	Female	170	51.99%
Education Background	Doctor	92	28.14%
	Master	183	55.96%
	Bachelor	43	13.15%
	Others	9	2.75%
Seniority	More Than 16 Years	124	37.92%
	11-15 Years	56	17.13%
	6-10 Years	65	19.88%
	Below 5 Years	82	25.07%
Professional Title	Professor	57	17.43%
	Associate Professor	119	36.40%
	Lecturer	123	37.61%
	Teaching Assistant	28	8.56%
Discipline	Liberal Art	161	49.24%
	Science	91	27.83%
	Engineering	54	16.51%
	Others	21	6.42%
School Level	985, 211 Colleges And Universities	23	7.03%
	Provincial Key Undergraduate Colleges And Universities	102	31.19%
	Municipal Undergraduate Colleges And Universities	202	61.78%

This paper uses self-designed questionnaires, and the questionnaire has designed three parts: the current situation of teaching and scientific research, the recognition of the scholarship of teaching and learning, and the evaluation criteria of the scholarship of teaching and learning, totaling 36 items. The research group makes a descriptive analysis of the data results, and presents the survey results and analysis of the current situation of teachers' teaching work as follows.

III. SURVEY RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

A. Teaching Input of College Teachers

Teachers, as individuals, have limited time and energy to devote to their work. In a certain period of time, teachers devote more energy to teaching, so the energy devoted to scientific research and other aspects of work will be reduced accordingly.

TABLE II. RANKING OF TIME INVESTED IN WORK [RANKING QUESTIONS]

Option	Average Composite Score
Teaching	3.50
Scientific Research	2.54
Teaching and Research	2.43
Social Service	1.53

^a Note: The data in the table are automatically generated by the "Questionnaire Star" website. The higher the score, the more time spent.

TABLE III. AVERAGE TEACHING HOURS PER WEEK IN RECENT YEARS [SINGLE CHOICE]

Option	Number Of People	Proportion
More Than 18 Classes	20	6.12%
13-18 Classes	83	25.38%
7-12 Classes	156	47.71%
Less Than 6 Classes	68	20.8%

From "Table II" and "Table III", it can be seen that most of the surveyed college teachers devote most of their time to teaching. The teachers have 7-12 classes per week, accounting for 47.71%; the teachers have more than 13 classes per week, accounting for 32.5%; and the teachers have more than 18 classes per week, accounting 6.12%. These data show that the teaching tasks of most college teachers are relatively heavy. Of course, there are differences

in teaching hours among teachers of different levels and different types in colleges and universities. Through observation and interviews, we also find that the teaching tasks of teachers in teaching-oriented universities are heavier than those in 985 and 211 universities. In teaching-oriented universities, the younger the age is, the lower the title is, and the heavier the teaching tasks the teachers will have.

TABLE IV. COLLEAGUES' RESPONSIBILITY FOR TEACHING [SINGLE CHOICE]

Option	Number of people	Proportion
All have the sense of strong responsibility	19	5.81%
Most have the sense of strong responsibility	171	52.29%
A few teachers have the sense of strong responsibility	110	33.64%
Few teachers have the sense of strong responsibility	27	8.26%

Viewing the data in "Table IV", 58.1% of the teachers surveyed think that most of their colleagues around them have a strong sense of responsibility for teaching, which shows that teaching has been paid attention to by teachers, and they can take teaching seriously and responsibly. Teachers in colleges and universities also need a good external atmosphere to devote themselves to teaching and research. The attitudes and performances of colleagues around them will affect the degree of teachers' own investment in teaching. If teachers feel that colleagues around them are perfunctory about teaching, it will be difficult for them to concentrate on teaching. On the contrary, if teachers feel that colleagues around them are serious and responsible for teaching, it will be easier for them to form a serious attitude towards teaching.

B. Teaching and Research Intention of College Teachers

Teaching, scientific research and social service are the three basic functions of modern universities, as well as the three basic tasks of college teachers. These three tasks not only have interrelated aspects, but also different fields and working methods. Foreign research on the individuality difference model of the relationship between teaching and scientific research in colleges and universities has found that "teaching and scientific research require opposite individuality characteristics". Scientific researchers like to be alone. Most of them are willing to live in secluded places, and they are indifferent to external pressure and interference. Teaching workers prefer to be in groups, and can respond positively to and deal with external pressure and interference, and are willing to communicate with people. The personality

traits of the two types of job requirements are totally different, and they are negatively correlated "[3]. Individual differences among college teachers exist objectively. Some teachers are good at teaching, and some are good at scientific research. Considering the limitation of individual time and energy, a small part of college teachers can be good at both. Therefore, for most teachers, there are some contradictions and conflicts objectively in the consideration to three tasks such as teaching, scientific research and social service.

Teaching is the basis of teachers' work. Under the system of "emphasizing scientific research while neglecting teaching", the teaching and scientific researches are not balanced, and 44.04% of teachers are willing to put teaching in the first place (see "Table V"). In addition, 72.48% of the teachers agree with the view that university teaching process is not only a process of preserving and disseminating knowledge, but also a process of knowledge transformation and expansion, while 67.05% of the teachers surveyed agree that university teaching is an academic activity. "This is the initial understanding that college teachers hope to develop teaching as a research activity, and it is also the cognitive basis that gives teaching an academic status." [4]

TABLE V. RANKING OF JOB CONTENT SELECTION [SINGLE CHOICE]

Option	Number of people	Proportion
Teaching	144	44.04%
Teaching and research	86	26.3%
Scientific research	73	22.32%
Social service	24	7.34%

However, it is not enough to promote the development of the scholarship of teaching and learning just by carrying out teaching work or changing the concept and understanding. As mentioned earlier, it is necessary to have the general characteristics of academic work for university teaching to become the scholarship of teaching and learning, such as "remarkable achievements, effective expression and reflective criticism". Whether it is "remarkable result" or "effective expression and reflective criticism", it is

inseparable from the exploration and research of teaching problems and laws. Therefore, carrying out teaching research is the only way for college teachers to practice and develop the scholarship of teaching and learning. Among the college teachers surveyed, 15.9% of them have strong sense of willingness to spend time on teaching research, and 51.38% have the sense of willingness to spend time on teaching research (see "Table VI" below).

TABLE VI. WILLINGNESS TO CARRY OUT TEACHING RESEARCH [SINGLE CHOICE]

Option	Number of people	Proportion
Strong sense of willingness	52	15.9%
Sense of willingness	168	51.38%
Do as the requirement	93	28.44%
Unwilling	14	4.28%

C. College Teachers' Teaching Distress

As a special research community, colleges and universities are mainly staffed by teachers. They are not engaged in knowledge production activities like scientists,

but mainly in the teaching activities of disseminating and applying knowledge. However, it is found from the survey that teachers' performance and achievements in disseminating and applying knowledge have not received real attention (see "Table VII" and "Table VIII").

TABLE VII. THE MOST IMPORTANT CONTENT OF CURRENT TITLE REVIEW [SINGLE CHOICE]

Option	Number of people	Proportion
Teaching performance	16	4.89%
Teaching research achievements	36	11.01%
Achievements in scientific research	270	82.57%
Social service	5	1.53%

TABLE VIII. CONDITIONS THAT TEACHERS VALUE IN ASSESSMENT, SELECTION AND EVALUATION [SINGLE CHOICE]

Option	Subtotal	Proportion
Achievements in scientific research	246	75.23%
Teaching level and quality	61	18.65%
Teachers' ethics level	12	3.67%
Social service capacity	8	2.45%

TABLE IX. THE BIGGEST DISTRESS IN TEACHING [SINGLE CHOICE]

Option	Number of people	Proportion
Heavy teaching task	81	24.77%
The professional title does not attach importance to teaching	207	63.3%
Others	39	11.93%

From the survey data in "Table IX", it can be seen that although most college teachers have a heavy teaching workload, the proportion that teachers regard "heavy teaching workload" as distress is not high, and the distress from professional title evaluation is their greatest distress. It can be seen that there is a clear scientific research orientation both in the review of teachers' professional titles and in the daily management assessment of teachers in colleges and universities. As the most important index condition for evaluating teachers, teachers' scientific research achievements far exceed other conditions. As one side of management, the school does not take "university teaching as an academic activity" into the evaluation system of teachers' academic level. Teachers' teaching performance and achievements are far less valued than the achievements made by teachers in scientific research. Their investment in teaching cannot be affirmed correspondingly, especially in the evaluation of professional titles closely related to teachers' own interests. These realities make college teachers feel distressed and helpless.

IV. DISCUSSION AND SUGGESTION

A. *Updating the Concept, Giving "Academic Status to University Teaching", and Setting up Teaching-oriented Professors*

On January 8, 2017, the General Office of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the General Office of the State Council issued the Opinions on Deepening the Reform of the Title System, which called for overcoming the tendency of being academic, qualified and paperless, so as to basically complete the series of titles reform tasks of engineering, health, agriculture, accounting, college teachers and scientific research in three years. As the government vigorously promotes the reform of administrative power of "release, control and service", universities will have greater right to examine and approve teachers' professional titles. On January 20, 2018, the CPC Central Committee, the State Council issued the "opinions on comprehensively deepening the construction and reform of the teaching staff in the new era". "Deepening the comprehensive reform of teacher management system, and effectively rationalizing the mechanism" specifically refers to the need to promote the reform of the professional title system for teachers in institutions of higher learning. The right to review is directly delegated to the higher school. And the higher institutions independently organize the title review, independent evaluation, and the appointment according to the post. It also states that "the colleges and universities should further promote the college teacher evaluation system, and highlight teaching performance and ethics assessment.

The professor giving lectures for undergraduate should be a basic system. In such a policy background, higher schools should actively promote the reform of the classification of professional title evaluation based on their orientation. This makes it possible and realistic for "university teaching to become the scholarship of teaching and learning". The colleges and universities should regard teaching as the scholarship of teaching and learning, give it a new position, and constantly build a reasonable evaluation index system and evaluation mechanism of academic level of teaching. The colleges and universities should set up teaching-oriented professor posts in the evaluation and appointment of college teachers' professional titles, fully affirm the investment and devotion of college teachers in teaching practice and research, and guide teachers to constantly improve their academic level of teaching, thus effectively improving the teaching quality of universities. Here, the author emphasizes that "teaching-oriented professors" are not "teaching professors". The evaluation and appointment of teaching-oriented professors is not only the evaluation of teachers' teaching input, but also the comprehensive evaluation of teachers' scholarship of teaching and learning in colleges and universities, which involves the evaluation of teachers' teaching knowledge, practical ability and teaching research results.

B. *Promoting the Development of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning of Teachers by Means of Multi-measures*

1) *Reasonably arranging the teaching workload of college teachers to allow enough time for the development of the scholarship of teaching and learning:* "The scholarship of teaching and learning has the identity of academics and teaching." [5] The scholarship of teaching and learning exists in the teaching system and must be rooted in teaching practice. From the survey, people can easily find that most college teachers have invested more time and energy in teaching work, which is conducive to the accumulation of teachers' teaching practical experience, and is the starting point for the development of teachers from experiential teaching to excellent teaching. At the same time, it also shows that college teachers have the basis of teaching practice if they intend to improve their scholarship of teaching and learning. In the survey, people also find that most teachers have a strong sense of teaching responsibility, which shows that they care about teaching and students, and about 60% of teachers are willing to spend time on teaching research, which shows that most college teachers have the inherent motivation to develop the scholarship of teaching

and learning. Therefore, colleges and universities should pay attention to the reasonable arrangement of teachers' teaching workload, leave enough time for these teachers to accumulate experience in teaching practice, develop academic teaching, and upgrade to the academic level of teaching.

2) *Building a platform for teaching exchange to expand the space for the development of the scholarship of teaching and learning of college teachers:* Since teachers care about teaching and have the will of teaching research, colleges and universities should try to build various platforms for teaching research and communication. The teachers can get more forms and ways to realize teaching openness and accept peer evaluation in addition to the publication of teaching papers. On the one hand, the construction of intramural teaching exchange platform can mainly focus on the construction of "teaching and research community". It can promote the development of "teaching practice community" by establishing exchange websites on the scholarship of teaching and learning and setting up teaching practice research projects. On the other hand, teachers are actively encouraged to go out of school and participate in various academic exchanges in teaching. In this way, teachers can not only open up and share their own teaching thinking in time, but also understand other people's teaching exploration in time, and expand their teaching horizons.

3) *Strengthening the evaluation of the scholarship of teaching and learning, reforming the system of evaluation of professional titles of college teachers, and providing guidance for the development of the scholarship of teaching and learning of college teachers:* According to the survey, 63.3% of the teachers in colleges and universities are most distressed by the fact that the professional title reviews don't pay attention to teaching. That is to say, more than half of the teachers surveyed believe that their teaching input and achievements can not be affirmed in the evaluation of professional titles, and that they can't fully demonstrate their due value and importance in all kinds of evaluation of teachers. This is actually a typical orientation of scientific research evaluation in Chinese colleges and universities for a long time. It is also the main reason why the development of the scholarship of teaching and learning of the teachers is hindered. The typical evaluation system of scientific research orientation has obvious drawbacks. It conflicts with the role orientation of college teachers, affects the enthusiasm of teachers who devote themselves to teaching work, has greater pressure on teachers, and affects the physical and mental health of teachers and so on.

V. CONCLUSION

The connotation of the scholarship of teaching and learning is rich, and its transformation to practice is restricted by many factors and conditions. It not only requires the participation of teachers' intrinsic motivation, but also needs solid teaching practice and continuous reflection and research on teaching problems, and more importantly, needs

a new external and effective academic incentive and evaluation mechanism. At present, the teaching tasks of most college teachers are rather heavy. On the basis of teachers' concern for teaching and their willingness to study teaching, the colleges and universities should not only rationally arrange teachers' teaching workload, but also constantly improve the incentive mechanism of teachers' teaching input and research, and promote the formation of teaching research results. The most important thing is to build a new title evaluation system that attaches importance to teachers' development of the scholarship of teaching and learning. Only in this way can we really promote the quality of higher education teaching.

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