

# Development of On-the-job Internship

## A Symbiosis Strategy for Student Teacher Preparation and the Construction of Teaching Staff in Rural Area

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**Abstract**—The field work, the college student to full-time teacher identity into poor areas of the school to complete the task of teaching practice, and as a means to solve the lack of rural teachers, the quality is not high the long-term fundamental problem restricting the development of rural education in national regions, but also effectively change the situation of students' teaching skills is not strong for a long time. From the current status quo and problems of rural education in national regions, the field work of the theoretical basis, practical value are analyzed, and the field work as the main line to promote the teachers' team construction in the countryside.

**Keywords**—*on-the-job internship; Cultivation of normal university students; Construction of rural teachers*

### I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, with the advance of balanced development of compulsory education, education especially the construction of the teaching staff in ethnic minority areas has increasingly become the hot issue, all kinds of exploration arises at this historic moment. In many theories and practice exploration, many effective experiences and achievements have been gained, and education in rural areas has also developed. However, the solution to the shortage of teaching staff in the rural area can't just depend on compulsory implement. It is practical to build an institutionalized, long-term effective mode and mechanism, basing on the teachers' professional development, and connect student teachers preparation, teacher education and the construction of teaching staff in rural area.

### II. THE THEORETICAL BASIS OF THE DINGGANG INTERNSHIP

According to practice of Marxism epistemology, Dinggang internship conforms to the cognitive rules of "practice - know - practice", whose starting point is "know" with the circle of the "know - practice - know again - and

then practice". It can improve student teachers' teaching skills. [1] By observing in real classroom and imitating teaching, student teachers can gain subject matter knowledge and skills. With the understanding of the knowledge, the application to teaching practice is the effective way to improve teaching ability. Dinggang internship can help student teachers' establish perceptual knowledge about the job they are going to be engaged in, and then upgrade perceptual knowledge to rational cognition.

As most of the graduates from normal universities will be engaged in the occupation of teacher, they must emersion in real teaching circumstances to acquire subject matter knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge and master teaching skills.

### III. MAIN PROBLEMS FACED BY THE CONSTRUCTION OF TEACHING STAFF IN RURAL AREA

#### A. Teacher Turnover

Economic development in ethnic minority areas is slow, educational infrastructure is backward, which leads to ineffective guarantee of living conditions and welfare benefits for teaching staff. Next, the administrators at all levels of the primary and secondary schools in those areas are lack of managerial experience. They cannot meet the teaching staff basic needs and give enough humanistic care. This will aggravate the conflicts between the teaching staff and administrators. The opportunity of receiving professional training and continuing education is inadequate, which provides them with limited career development. [2] According to the statistics, the attrition of teaching staff in 2007-2008 academic years is 255732 people, accounting for 7.65% of the total number of them in rural area. During 2010-2013, the number of teaching staff declined from 4.7295 million to 3.3045 million, the rate of attrition is as high as 30% in three years. Besides, the social status of teaching staff in minority areas is lower than that of urban teachers. In order to improve their graduation rates and

reputation, public schools and private schools in the big cities to attract excellent teachers with a high level teaching environment and generous welfare salary as bait. In this case, many teachers choose to take the initiative to leave the countryside to big cities.

### *B. The Issue of Teaching Staff Aging*

In rural areas, especially in remote rural areas, it often fails to attract young teachers due to poor educational conditions. In terms of age structure, there is many senior teaching staff over the age of 50, and few young teachers under 30 years old. According to the survey, the average age of teachers in rural primary schools in China is 43.1 years old, 8.5 percent of rural primary schools do not have teachers under the age of 46, and 6.2 percent of rural primary school teachers are over 55 years old. The problem of teaching staff aging leads to outdated knowledge structure. In today's information society, the lack of knowledge of multimedia network will limit opportunity to obtain online knowledge which is main method to broaden students' horizon. Consequently the students in rural area are less competitive.

### *C. Unbalanced Discipline Structure*

The structure of different subjects reflects the allocation of teaching staff. At present, the allocation of teaching staff for different subjects is unbalanced. The numbers of Chinese and mathematics teachers are much larger than those in other subjects. Teachers of Chinese and mathematics are supposed to teach other subjects due to the inadequate teaching staff. They even have to teach several subjects because there are few teachers in those subjects on the position. Through survey and study, some scholars note that teachers of Chinese and Political subjects are adequate in 99.8% of schools in rural area, while teachers of PE, physics, chemistry, biology subjects are in great demands in 87.5% of those schools. Particularly, in some ethnic minority areas, there are subjects such as music, fine arts and etc. on the schedule, but they are hardly implemented. Full-time teachers of English, PE, music, computer, health education are not included in the teaching staff in some schools. The main reason is that there are few resources in those fields. On the other hand, the teaching materials and tools such as computers can't fully utilized which results in waste.

### *D. Unbalanced Education Background of Teaching Staff*

Education background reflects the teaching staff's quality and ability of academic research. There is a great difference in the education background of teachers in the schools in minority areas. Currently, most of teaching staff hold the degree under college level which is far below the national average level. It is a fact that primary school graduates are recruited to teach in primary school students or junior middle school graduates are recruited to teach in junior middle school students in some rural minority areas. In regard to teaching staff for pre-school education, they are qualified after they receive professional training, which is required in *the national kindergarten management regulations*. However, a considerable number of kindergartens, especially those private kindergartens have to recruit junior middle school or

high school graduates in the minority areas. Taking guangxi as an example, most teachers in rural primary schools in hold a high school diploma and junior college degree, while teachers with a bachelor's degree are only 20%. The middle school teachers, most of them have college degree, while teachers with bachelor or master degree account for only 30.6% of the total number of teachers. And nearly 5% of the teachers do not have the middle school teachers' qualification. Those who are with higher degrees are not willing to work in the rural area permanently or even temporarily.

## IV. THE PRACTICAL VALUE OF THE DINGGANG INTERNSHIP MODE

### *A. To Open the Closed Education in Ethnic Minority Areas*

Poverty is long-term difficulties faced by our society, and building a harmonious society will be duty-bound to take on the burden of poverty, poor education is the fundamental source of all poverty. "The culture of poverty is a typical 'sinking culture'. The overall lag between education and economy in rural areas has formed a vicious circle of obstinacy and closure. [3] Student teachers who take Dinggang teaching practice can relieve the strain on the quantity of teaching staff in poverty-stricken areas. During the teaching practice process, student teachers will exert an influence on the teaching philosophy, assessment system and goals of education to local teaching staff. Updated education theories triggers stronger learning motivation and broadens horizon of local students, which helps the local teachers to break through the bondage of empirical teaching and improve their key competences. The combination of theory and practice is an important link for better service for basic education. The figures and facts collected during Dinggang internship is the basis for adjusting student teacher preparation program and conducting teaching reform to closely meet the needs of basic education in rural area. At the same time, it is an effectively combination of resources from normal universities and schools in rural area.

### *B. To Improve the Overall Quality of Teaching Staff in Ethnic Minority Areas*

At present, the quantity and quality of teaching staff in rural areas is generally insufficient unsatisfying. On the one hand, excellent student teachers who take Dinggang teaching practice can relieve the strain on the quantity of teaching staff in poverty-stricken areas. By organizing science technology cultural activities in rural area, student teachers can promote balanced development of education and construction of new countryside. The local teachers can participate full time program in normal universities to receive professional training, which is the way to refine their teaching philosophy and skills, to upgrade their degree.<sup>[4]</sup> therefore, Dinggang internship is the opportunity for universities to set up teaching practice base in rural area.

### *C. To Perpetuate the Concept of Teaching and Learning by Doing*

The internship reflects the concept of teaching and learning by doing claimed by Mr. Tao xingzhi. He once said,

"The teaching method is based on the method of learning, how to learn leads how to teach and how to learn leads how to teach." Learning by doing is the most effective way to learn. Education for student teachers is supposed to set situational teaching environment for them to learn and practice in order to prepare them to take demanding teaching jobs. Good teaching is a complex, abstract phenomenon; it can only be obtained by getting involved in real teaching situation. [5] Learning by doing is the reason for student teachers gaining practical experience by taking Dinggang internship. This also motivates them work in local schools.

#### V. TO TAKE THE DINGGANG INTERNSHIP MODE TO MOTIVATE THE CONSTRUCTION OF TEACHING STAFF IN ETHNIC MINORITY AREAS

First of all, the Dinggang internship must be conducted on the basis of students, parents and social understanding and acceptance, and it needs the legal and policy support from the government. A term of a academic year can be scheduled for Dinggang internship. A system for accommodation security should be set up, responsibilities and obligations for universities, local government and schools should be clear.[6]

Secondly, rising awareness of safety and perseverance for Dinggang internship, people-oriented management and teaching guidance must run through the whole process of the internship. Dual tutorial system (mentors from both the universities and local schools) can ensure the safety and quality of the internship. Mentors are supposed to observe, evaluate and give feedback to student teachers' class. And mentors should attend difficulties of board and lodging, which is essential to ensure the internship going smoothly.

Finally, it is necessary to set up cooperation between the government, universities and local schools. The government should play the role of policy coordination, resource allocation and financing. Colleges and universities will provide human resources, design and implement teacher preparation program, equip the student teachers with proper teaching knowledge and skills, improve the local teachers' teaching. Local authorities of education should work closely with the universities to conduct research and study, and then analyzing the needs of local teaching position. The government, universities, the local schools are a community to share common interests. In the this community, the government is supposed to balance the development of education quality, universities are supposed to prepare high quality graduates, local schools are supposed to improve the teaching of the teachers.[7] Since the three parties share common interest, the government can't just rely on administrative means to solve the problem, and should pay more attention to the coordination of relations, address problems the universities encounter in the process of teacher training, such as teachers' welfare, student teachers' academic level improving. This is effective ways to motivate the three parties to take initiative to contribute to the projects.

#### VI. CONCLUSION

The practice proves that Dinggang internship is feasible to solve the problems of education in rural areas, and the

construction of teaching staff also has some theoretical basis. However, it is a highly systematic and comprehensive project, and it is very difficult to do so. Government's support is especially important. From the analysis of the reality, it is very difficult to achieve the goals without government's and authorities of education's support. Therefore, a platform should be set up for local government, universities and local schools for further cooperation to enhance the education development in rural area.

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