

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT IN CHINESE EDUCATION SYSTEM: A CASE STUDY OF CHINESE TEACHERS

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Abstract

China is the world most populous state with a population over 1.3 billion, overlaying about 9.6 million kilometers. China has the largest educational system throughout world with almost 260 million college students and over 15 million teachers in about 514 000 schools. In current years, the Ministry of Education has shifted from direct manipulate to macro level. It steers education reform through legal guidelines, plans, finances allocation, information offerings, and coverage steering and administrative method. In this regard, teachers are the most crucial and useful means in schools that make an essential effect on improvement of the whole society. Without enough and qualified instructors, it is difficult to attain educational targets. Teachers' education mainly focused to develop four elements: enhancing the general academic education of instructors, increasing their knowledge about the subjects they are going to educate, knowledge about children in schools and the improvement of practical competencies. Thus the current study is fundamentally focusing on reforms introduced by the Chinese government which, undoubtedly, directly contributing to the quality of education system in China. Moreover, the understanding of reforms in China's education system will be a thought provoking for other countries which are endeavoring to build their education system on sound lines.

Keywords: Education, China's Education System, Teachers Training, Capacity building

Introduction

China has one of the largest educational systems in the world providing quality education to various grades. For further enhancing the quality of education the ministry of China has taken a step from direct manipulation to

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macro level. Undoubtedly, the new strategy ranges from legal guidelines to administrative methodology with especial focus on teachers which are considered the pillars of Chinese education system from the very beginning. The foundation of teacher education in China dates back to 1897 with the establishing of Nanyang Gongxue (a Higher Public School) in Shanghai (predecessor of Jiaotong University) after which Jinshi Daxuetang, the Imperial University of Peking (Predecessor of Beijing University) in 1898, with instructor schooling sections. In 1904, a proper independent system for teacher training was introduced where the primary was on institutional management, which includes student recruitment, selection of curricular content material, evaluation of educational goals modeled after Japanese teacher education system, which in flip, was borrowed from French model of instructor education.¹

The teacher training institutions had been based on two levels – the intermediate and advanced colleges geared closer to teacher training for primary and junior secondary level. These institutions have been later changed into regular schools and normal universities. By 1920s, with tremendous adjustments in the whole Chinese society for modernization, the instructor training institutions turned to study and borrowed from the West, in particular from the U.S. This had a lot to do with students who were sent by the government to abroad in order to examine education system in the U.S. In 1922, the general public college was modified to a 6-3-3 version just like the U.S. Version (with 6 years of education at the primary level, 3 years at junior secondary and three year at the senior secondary).²

Along with this new system ,the diversification in teacher training institutions were also introduced and specialized teacher training colleges, regular schools and normal universities began to serve the purposes of teachers training at different stages of education and this completely changed teacher training programmes. With the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the improvement of instructor schooling entered into a new era.³

To meet the large call for to popularize education, the Soviet model was borrowed to further consolidate a 3-tier teacher training system even as retaining the impartial teacher training institutions that had existed earlier. The maximum dramatic change took place it was that each one of the instructor training institutions have become public ownership below the administration

¹ Gopinathan, S., Tan, S., Fang, Y.P., Ponnusamy, L. D, Ramos, C., & Chao, E.. *Transforming Teacher Education: Redefining Professionals for 21st Century Schools*. (Singapore: National Institute of Education, 2008).

² Chen, Y., & Zhu, Y. *Teacher Education Research*. East China Normal University Press. (China: MOE, Development and Planning Department, 2011). See also *Analytical Report on the Development of National Education Enterprise. April 2011*(Internal circulation, 2003).

³ Ibid.

of the central government, along with the writing and issuing of teaching packages, content and numerous institutional norms. Newly educated instructors had been assigned teaching posts through the authorities in a uniform way. Under an exceptionally centralized and planned system, trainer training in China has, for a long time, been run as “self-contained or closed” system.⁴

Thirty years later in 1979, with China’s opening internationally, the academic agency embraced an energetic new age of reform and improvement. Law for Compulsory Education was issued in 1986, which legally mandated the constructing of an adequately trained, furnished and stable teaching force. This indicated a turning point in which the development of trainer schooling in China changed into connected with unparalleled significance. The Chinese government said that trainer schooling is a strategic degree and the “machine tool” for educational improvement.⁵

The government expanded financial investment, consolidated the infrastructure of instructor training institutions, laid emphasis on additional teaching training to more capable and competent teachers and research staff by means of encouraging academic studies, curriculum improvement and instructional reform to elevate the satisfactory of pre-service students and the quality of training.⁶

Scholarships have been supplied for students getting into training institutions and the recruited college students for teaching in schools on contract basis in order to meet the needs of teachers in exclusive areas. In-service teachers training became installed in massive scales and the schools for persevering with schooling for teachers in towns and counties were both reinstated or opened.⁷

Methodology

Research is qualitative and descriptive in nature in which the already available facts and information about the contents are critically analyzed. The data is collected through secondary sources which include the books, magazines and published articles. Since the data has been collected related to the new education policy in China, however, the old education policy has also

⁴ Wang, J. School-based teacher professional development system: one elementary school’s practice and its theoretical significance. In Zhou N.Z (Ed.). *Teacher education reform and teacher professional development: International vision and local practice*, (China: East China Normal University Press, 2007a).

⁵ Wang, J. Teacher education in China: Current situation, issues and future trends. In Zhou N.Z (Ed.), *Teacher education reform and teacher professional development: International vision and local practice*. (China: East China Normal University Press, 2007b).

⁶ Chen, Y., & Zhu, Y. *Teacher Education Research*. East China Normal University Press. (China: MOE, Development and Planning Department, 2011). See also *Analytical Report on the Development of National Education Enterprise. April 2011*(Internal circulation, 2003).

⁷ Ibid

been focused and comparatively discussed for better understanding. The qualitative approach has been adopted since it was not possible to collect primary data due to lack of resources and accessibility limitations. Like all education based studies, this research does not claim to address the issue in completeness but one of the ways forward to understand the learning pedagogy and methodology of Chinese education system.

Recent Reforms in Teacher Education

As China reached its dreams for basically universalizing 9-year obligatory schooling in year 2000, the structure and social demand for schooling have changed with rapid expansion of education. The state, the society and the secondary colleges have positioned better expectations on teachers and the traditional instructor schooling system has been seemed as falling short in retaining up with the call for.⁸

Entering the new century, teacher education system in China has broken its conventional unbiased system and moved to a higher education of instructor schooling. The intermediate ordinary faculties fast disappeared due to mergers or their conversion into secondary or vocational faculties. “Consequently, the monopoly of teachers training institutions of teacher has been changed and is gone forever”.⁹

In 2010, the Chinese authorities issued its guiding report, Outline of National Mid- and Long-term Educational Reforms and Developments (2010-2020), leading the Chinese education into a new decade. The outline emphasizes the significance and requirements for “strengthening the construction of the teaching force”, which spells out the vision on restructuring the instructor schooling device for the near destiny.¹⁰

Nationwide Network of Teacher Preparation

Since 2008, China MOE, in collaboration with the World Bank, initiated a programme regarding improvement of requirements for primary and secondary school teachers, curriculum requirements for teachers training applications, accreditation standards for teacher schooling establishments and satisfactory of packages. It was decided that a system of teacher education will totally base on expert standards and the one that encourages innovations and is effective and sustainable in the long run.¹¹

In 2002 and 2003, China MOE set up consultation organs for instructor schooling, which includes “Expert Committee for Teacher Education,” “Expert Committee for ICT in Teacher Education,” and “Expert Committee for Teacher Education Curriculum Resources.” These Committees were entrusted to conduct studies; consultancy and other offerings on problems

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ China MOE. *Outline of National Mid- and Long-term Educational Reform and Development (2010-2020)*, (China: People’s Education Press, 2010).

¹¹ Ibid.

faced by teacher in general education in order to make the system that follow the principle of democracy and scientific research.¹²

In September 2003, China MOE released “National Teacher Education Network Alliance Plan” with the 6 key normal universities beneath the direct administration of MOE performing as the primary collaborating institutions. The objectives were to set up an elevated system of teacher education which includes the ordinary universities and colleges, satellite TV network and internet. They decided to work in collaboration and to re-construct and exchange teacher education assets.¹³

Special training was designed for new teachers at some point of the probation period to help them to meet the criteria. The government additionally holds schooling programmes for educational administrators, mainly college principals in order to enhance their managerial capabilities and leadership skills. The government has granted sabbatical leave i.e half year every five years for headmasters and teachers for improving their qualifications.¹⁴

Innovations in Pre-service Education

With the increasing expectations and demand for elevating the professional quality of primary and secondary instructors, mainly below the deepening of the country wide, curriculum reforms for primary and secondary teachers training was initiated by the end of last century. Teacher training institutions were assigned different tasks to reform and up- to- date curriculum and introduced new pedagogical skills in teaching. In fact, lots of them have taken the initiative in actively developing their own strategies to meet the demand.¹⁵

Since 2007, East China Normal University (ECNU) initiated a reform plan that ambitions to polish the pre-service college students’ professional abilities and cultivate high quality future instructors. Meng Xiancheng Academy, named after the primary President of ECNU, has been set up to offer skill based knowledge to hone up their fundamental social and management capabilities and emerge as greater holistically evolved future teachers who're competitive inside the job market place.¹⁶

Such activity-based training has enriched the curriculum and classroom teaching in instructor education programs and improves their quality of aiming to train future teachers in the right direction. Facing extra competitive in the

¹²Ibid.

¹³Paine, L.W., & Fang, Y.P. Reform as hybrid model of teaching and teacher development in China. *International Journal for Education Research*, 45(4-5), (2006): 279-289.

¹⁴Ministry of Education. *Training Requirements for Primary and Secondary School Principals*, (2012). Retrieved from www.gov.cn/fwxx/bw/jyb/content_2267061.htm, accessed 9th November, 2016.

¹⁵Gao, D.. (Ed.) *Research and Practice in the Curriculum of Normal Universities and Colleges*, (Tianjin People’s Press, 2000).

¹⁶Ibid.

process market, different ordinary universities have also started out similar activities. For a long term in China, in teacher training institutions three primary areas were focused, namely, the ones that specialize in disciplinary expertise, pedagogical know-how and teaching practice respectively. How to coordinate the three areas of publications properly has remained the focal point of discussion around reform in teacher education curriculum and pedagogy.¹⁷

As better professional standards are required for future teachers globally, key national ordinary universities have experimented with restructuring the curriculum provision for instructor education software offerings. North-East China Normal University has modified its curriculum into three wide modules: liberal arts, pedagogy in a special discipline, and teacher expert schooling. The liberal arts include humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, thinking and art-related publications.¹⁸

Current pre-service teacher training in China is provided at the tertiary schooling stage by means of three specialized colleges, four years undergraduate degree studies and post-graduate diploma or coursework. The conventional eight-week teaching practice has been criticized as being too short for teacher trainers and schools find it disrupting or too busy to have a tendency to students' instructors coming for practicum.¹⁹

In the rural regions of Southwest China, teacher shortages had been common problem and classroom teaching has been of low quality. Beginning teachers are unwilling to provide their services in poorly facilitated rural schools. After a good deal piloting, in 2006, Southwest University set up practicum faculties in rural areas where their pre-service students are sent for teaching practice guided by means of the subject specialists. Since then these colleges have come to be lengthy-term stable bases for the college's coaching practice.²⁰

In the rural colleges, the teacher students spend one semester to teach their own classes and specialize in the following responsibilities:

- Planning and observing lesson plans, doing trial lessons and evaluating coaching, tutoring teacher students after class. They teach 4-15 hours in a week.
- Taking charge of the class and deal the students' problems, organize class activities and act as a class administrators.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Paine, L.W., Fang, Y.P., & Wilson, S. Entering a culture of teaching: Teacher induction in Shanghai. In E. Britton, L. Paine, D. Pimm, & S. Raizen, *Comprehensive teacher induction: Systems for early career learning* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2003): 20-82

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Sargent, T., & Hannum, E. *Doing More with Less: Teacher Professional Learning Communities in Resource-Constrained Primary Schools in Rural China*, (2009). Retrieved from at http://repository.upenn.edu/gansu_papers/14. (October, 2011).

- Conducting academic studies which are mixed with the specifics of their disciplinary areas and observing the school needs and traits to identify and pursue studies of subject matter in their very own interest.
- Assisting the practicum schools' training and coaching reform tasks. They are endorsed to offer workshops to the school teaching staff related to their very own issue areas, educate teachers on using ICT in schools, develop teaching aids and restore broken facilities.
- They additionally take part inside the local communities' tradition, science and technology activities.²¹

Strengthening In-service Teacher Training

The new call by the teachers for his or her continuing education has challenged the adequacy and quality of traditional in-service provision institutions (which include refresher schools and faculties of training at city and district stages) and for this reason the faculties of education at city stage had been merged into regular universities or colleges to become school for adult training.²²

On the other hand, however, the instructor refresher schools have been consolidated with new roles and functions such as professional development related to management, research service, improvement and use of educational records assets demanded by the neighborhood communities, townships and rural villages. These nonetheless independently run trainer schooling institutions on the county level and play indispensable roles in providing teachers with training for instructors in the rural regions.²³

In-service teacher training courses offered in town or district schools was the main component of ongoing training for instructors. Time management of teachers at work and the susceptible connection of the content taught during training with practical day-to-day experiences had been two of the major complaints of instructor participants in general.²⁴ Student teachers are inducted into teacher learning communities where teaching, movement studies, action research and expert studying were combined.²⁵

Professional development institutions intended to build “teacher centered in-service training” mainly focused on permitting individuals to develop their confidence and experience of SBCD (school based curriculum

²¹ Ibid.

²² Shi, X., & Englert, P.A.J. Reform of Teacher Education in China, *Journal of Education for Teaching*, Vol. 34, no. 4, 2008, (2008): 347 – 359.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Paine, L.W., & Fang, Y.P. Reform as hybrid model of teaching and teacher development in China, (2006) *International Journal for Education Research*, 45(4-5): 279-289.

²⁵ Sun, Y., & Zhao, M.. Teacher professional development schools: Exploration, experience and learning. *Research in Teacher Education* 1, (2004).

development)”.²⁶ In this manner, faculty-based instructor development has combined teaching, research and professional development into one entity.²⁷

Online Teaching Training

With fast development of technology and its implementation in China, on-line studying has end up an important choice for elementary and secondary school teachers. More these days, China MOE prepared a sequence of on line training activities, inclusive of those for principals, teacher leaders, magnificence administrators (homeroom instructors) and new curriculum training. The “National Plan for Teacher Education Network Alliance” stated earlier has a main project to expand excessive high-quality teacher education sources to serve for the want of on-line instructor continuing training. Currently, this Alliance includes 14 participants, of which 09 are ordinary universities inclusive of the 06 national key normal universities. In 2011, 07 of the establishments have become national web sites for on line learning for teachers advocated by China MOE.²⁸

However, two tremendous moves stand out as the result of the reform. First, a link was developed between “legislative measures” and ‘academic regulation’ with the general making plans system. The Teachers Law and the Educational Law of the People’s Republic of China have been made and publicized in latest years, in which instructors’ rights and obligations and academic financing have been stipulated.²⁹

Second, there has been a significant improvement, though some distance from adequate, in instructors’ treatment. Almost all simple and secondary instructors have been paid their full salaries in the January 1995. Different measures were taken to make sure that instructors cashed the IOUs they collected over the preceding years.³⁰ Besides, new situations are making new demanding situations to the improvement of instructor training and to conduct studies within the field.³¹

Respect for Teachers

In 1983, the Chinese authorities introduced the primary “Teachers’ Day” in Chinese history and has seeing that been celebrating it on 9th September

²⁶ Xu, Y. School-based teacher development through a school-university collaborative project: a case study of a recent initiative in China. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, Vol. 41, no.1, (2009): 49 – 66.

²⁷ Wang, J. Teacher education in China: Current situation, issues and future trends. In Zhou N.Z (Ed.), *Teacher education reform and teacher professional development: International vision and local practice*. (East China Normal University Press, 2007).

²⁸ China MOE. *Outline of National Mid- and Long-term Educational Reform and Development (2010-2020)*, (People’s Education Press, 2010).

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ma, S. Teacher management. In B. Zhang (Ed.). *Chinese education almanac 1995*, (Beijing: People’s Education Press, 1995): 261-263

³¹ Ji, X. *Teacher education: Past and present: China educational sciences*, (Beijing: The Central Institute of Educational Research, 1986).

every year.³² Many junior and secondary school teachers have been promoted for their contribution. In mid 1980s the public's attitudes toward teachers improved significantly.³³

Improvement of Treatment of Teachers

Besides constructing up the public's respect for teachers, the authorities additionally made efforts to improve the treatment for instructors. Since 1978, there was a huge boom in Chinese instructors' salaries and their living situations have additionally been advanced. Teachers acquire subsidies primarily based on the time of teaching and also bonuses which can be calculated at 10% in their salaries.³⁴

In 1985 the Chinese authorities decided that instructor education institutions ought to be orientated toward general education, especially in the rural regions where certified and devoted teachers were considered crucial for its development. Proponents of the former argued that professional development should be the purpose of teachers training because these trainers will be the future teachers of the country.³⁵

Accreditation of Normal Institutions

To meet the big call for pre-service teachers, a massive variety of ordinary institutions had introduced since 1978. Besides, a few universities, majority of the institutions without having previous experience in any respect also involved in teacher education.³⁶

Many teachers discovered themselves not able to keep up with the demands of social and educational development. In the ultimate 10 years, many regular faculties have been promoted and became regular faculties and, in flip, many normal faculties become normal universities.³⁷

Improvement in Qualification of Teachers

The qualification system has gone through different reforms. It was decided that the people who were interested in teaching must receive qualification certificate and the teacher's qualification exam will be held nationally. In the past, the exam was held on the provincial level. But now the

³²Defeng, Li. Modernization and teacher education in China. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 15(2), (1999): 182

³³Yiming,Z. and YanPing, F. Characterizing Reform and Change of Teacher Education in China in the New Era. *Journal of Research, Policy & Practice of Teachers & Teacher Education*, 1(1), (2011): 30-44

³⁴Defeng, Li. Modernization and teacher education in China. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 15(2), (1999): 183

³⁵Shen, A. Teacher Education and National Development in China. *Journal of Education*, 176(2), (1994): 57—71

³⁶Zhang, J. Teacher preparation in China. In J. Lane (Ed.), *Ferment in education: A look abroad*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995): 148—156.

³⁷Department of Teacher Education of State Education Commission *Teacher training and professional development in China*. (Beijing: State Education Commission, 1995).

prospective teachers will appear for two types of exam for all level i.e the written examination and the interview.³⁸

Promotions and Rewards

Different expert titles were set for each primary and secondary teacher. Mostly, the teachers need to attend additional courses and certificates for promotions. However, in 2015, the Rural Teacher Support Programme was initiated which was mainly concerned with the promotion of rural teachers apart from publications and foreign language abilities. Special-Grade was introduced for teachers as an honour and their salary was based within 15% of the full range of all instructors.³⁹

Salaries

Reform in the teachers' earnings structure, delivered in 2009, provided a new way of calculating teachers' salaries totally based on performance. In the new system, instructor income consists of 4 parts: post, grade, performance and allowance. Among them, the first two are the fundamental salaries and next two are totally based on their contributions.⁴⁰

Conclusion

Since it has been argued that in term of quality education, China is providing the largest quality based education system which fulfills the market demands. The learning process consists of various grades which are designed to cater the needs of society. In this context, the role ministry of China has taken commendable step at policy level to further increase the quality of education. There is no denial to the fact that the new strategy not only provides legal guidelines and administrative methodology but deeply focuses teachers' capacity building which, undoubtedly, is considered the pillar of Chinese education system. Teacher education in China commenced from mastering and borrowing models and studies of different international locations. Nevertheless, reform and development must replicate the distinctiveness, creativity and development of China's own teacher education. As a massive rising modern state, China also wishes to take upon itself the responsibility, duty and capacity to offer first-class exercise and cases of achievement to teacher training globally especially within the place of policy making, curriculum improvement, models of pre- and in-service teacher development and so forth. Teacher training in China should broaden in dynamic interplay with global practices, which, perhaps, is the new route for reform and development.

³⁸OECD. *Education in China: A Snapshot*, (Organization and management of Education in China, 2016). Retrieved from <https://www.oecd.org/china/Edu-in-China-a-snapshot.Pdf>, accessed August, 2018).

³⁹Yiming, Z. and YanPing,F.Characterizing reform and change of teacher education in China in the new era. *Journal of Research, Policy & Practice of Teachers & Teacher Education*, 1(1), (2011): 30-44

⁴⁰Ibid.

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