

On the Construction of Teachers Professional Ethics under the Background of Teachers' Specialization

Guo Zheng¹

Personnel Department
China West Normal University

Li Li²

China West Normal University

Correspondence:

Guo Zheng,

Personnel Department, China West Normal University,
No. 1 Shi Da Road, Nanchong, 637009,
Sichuan, China

The research is financed by Education Development Research Center of Sichuan Province (Project No. CJF012027)

Abstract

Teachers' professional ethics is not only the core content of teachers' specialization, the power and the soul of teachers' professional development, but also the essential embodiment of teachers. The ascension of teachers' professional ethics is a higher level of teacher professional development. To strengthen the construction of teachers' professional ethics is the inevitable demand of teachers' professional development. The effective construction of teachers' professional ethics should be combined with teachers' professional development and it should pay attention to the teacher's professional life, attach great importance to teachers' need, highlight the teacher's subjectivity, and strengthen the ethical connotation of school management system construction.

Key Words: teachers' specialization, professional ethics, countermeasures

1. Introduction

Teachers' specialization is the trend of current global education reform and development. From the point of teachers' development in our country, it is also constantly advancing the construction of teachers' professionalization; and it has become the main entry point of teachers' education reform and development. However, as an important part of the construction of teachers' professionalization, the construction of teachers' professional ethics hasn't got a corresponding development in the process of professional development of teachers. Its present status and the specialization of teachers' professional development is not balanced, which means teachers' professional knowledge development is relatively high, but professional ethical level is relatively poor or not. Professional ethics construction is too idealistic. It lacks of attention to individual teachers themselves, and its professionalism is not strong and other issues also exist. This article mainly from the teachers' professional development discusses the knowledge of professional ethics under the background of teachers' professionalization. It analyzes the main problems of teachers' professional ethics at present, looks for an effective way to enhance teachers' professional ethics, and promotes teachers' professional development.

2. Teachers' Professional Development and Its Connotation

2.1 A Brief History of Teachers' Professional Development

As one kind of professions, teaching is one of the oldest which appears almost simultaneously with human civilization and has a long history. However, in the early days of human society, teaching profession is a kind of professional experience. It is engaged in teaching experience heritage, rather than the specialized teaching practice. From the process from experience to specialization, the teaching profession has gone through a long process of development. In the development process, teachers' professional specialization increasingly stood out, and gradually been organized. To the mid-20th century, teachers' professional specialization began developing rapidly. In 1966, UNESCO held a "Special Intergovernmental Meeting on the Status of Teachers" in Paris. "Recommendations on the Status of Teachers" session clearly stressed, "Education should be regarded as specialized occupations". This profession requires that faculty have strict and ongoing research to obtain and maintain professional knowledge and expertise of the public service; it requires that they have personal and shared responsibility of those students under the jurisdiction.¹ This is the first time to discuss education through international scholars and government sources, giving national teachers' professional recognition and encouragement. Later, the world has appeared a series which were designed to improve teachers' professional level of theory research, policy documents and regulations.

In 1955, the convening of the World Conference of Professional Organizations of Teachers led discussions of teachers' professional issues, and promoted the formation and development of teachers' professional organizations; in 1966, the International Labor Organization and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization put forward the "Recommendations on the Status of Teachers", which is proposed for the first time in the form of official documents of teachers' professionalism and pointed out that "teachers should be treated as a special profession"; In 1971, Japan has clearly pointed out in the "Basic Measures for Future Expansion and Comprehensive School Education Adjustment" by the Central Council for Education that "teaching profession already requires high professionalism"; In 1986, two reports, namely, Carnegie's "Country Preparing Teachers for the 21st Century" and Holmes "Tomorrow's Teachers" have been published, which were regard as the symbols. They regarded teachers' professional development

as the goal of teachers' education reform, and the central idea was to establish the same thing as doctors, lawyers, and teachers "professional"; In 1996, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization of the 45th session of the international education conference emphasized teachers' role in the social change, and made clear that "professional - as a strategy to reform the teachers' position and work".² In China, "Teacher's Law" which was introduced in 1994 stated, "Teachers are professionals of performing teaching duties". It was the first confirmation that admitted teachers' professional status from a legal perspective; in 1995, the State Council promulgated the "teacher qualification regulations"; in 2000, the ministry of education promulgated "the Measures for the Implementation of Teachers' Qualification Regulations", teachers' qualification system began to fully implement across the country; in 2000, the first scientific classification of occupational authoritative document of publication "People's Republic of China ISCO Ceremony", classified the Chinese professional into eight classes for the first time, and teachers belong to the category of "professional and technical personnel." With the rapid development of society, technology, economy and culture, education work presents more and more complexity and creative, and what's more, professional educations become more significant. From the government to the public, all of them have a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the connotation of teachers' professional career and the nature of the work, which put forward a higher request to teacher's qualities. At the same time, the prosperity of educational science also provides more theoretical support for the teachers' education and teaching activities, creates good conditions for the professional development of teachers' profession, and teachers' professionalization obtains a better development.

2.2 The Connotation of Teachers' Specialization

For the connotation of teachers' specialization, people always have been in dispute. The author will analyze the teachers' specialization from three basic concepts: professional, specialization and trade specialization. Professional is a special kind of professional type which is differentiate from many professions along the social division of labor and career development to a certain historical stage; Specialization is professional specialization, mainly including forming a system of specialized knowledge and skills, implementing professional education and professional qualification authentication system, standardizing the work ethic, and establishing professional organization, etc.; About industry specialization, sociologist Emile Durkheim have pointed out earlier in his "*The Theory of Social Division of Labor*", "because human beings want to survive, they must have new development conditions, and once social relations between individuals have been widely established, they want to maintain their position, and then they must be along the road to professional development."³ Then the teacher specialization can be understood as the following: it is a process of professional development in which teachers' career develop to a certain historical stage, they depend on the professional organization, lifelong education and professional training, obtaining professional knowledge, standardizing the work ethic, and striving to become a good professional educator. The basic meaning of teacher's specialization includes: firstly, teachers' professional includes professional disciplines and education. The nation has academic standards of the job of teachers; they should have necessary educational knowledge, skills and professional ethics requirements. Secondly, the country has specialized agencies of teacher education, specific content and measures. Thirdly, the state has identified and management systems of the qualifications for teachers and teacher education institutions. Fourthly, the teacher specialization is a develop concept, and it is not only a kind of state, but also a process of deepening.

3. The Understanding of Teachers' Professional Ethics under the Background of Teachers' Specialization

As can be seen from the basic meaning of teachers' specialization, the core content of specialization of teachers mainly has two: one is a teacher's professional knowledge; the second is the teachers' professional ethics. Teacher's professional knowledge refers to the erudite teachers shall possess professional knowledge and professional ability. Teachers' professional ethics refers to the collection of the moral ideals, moral values, ethics and moral behavior, etc. in the teaching practice.⁵ If the teacher's professional knowledge is the external measure of teachers' specialization, the specialization of teachers' professional ethics is to measure the internal dimensions. As Goodson pointed out, "teaching is a kind of moral and ethical professional at the first place. New professional spirits need to reiterate and regard those as guiding principles". In the new teaching ethics, specialization and professionalism will achieve unity around the definition of teaching and students learning." Visibly, teachers' professional ethics is the core content of teacher professional development. It is not only the most important power of teachers' professional development, but also an important part of the construction of teachers' professionalization. Teachers' professional ethics of ascension is a higher level of specialization of teachers, and they influence and restrict each other. To this end, China's education administrative departments increasingly attach importance to teachers' professional ethics construction. The ministry of education promulgated the "Education Law of the People's Republic of China", "The Teachers' Qualification Regulations", "The Measures for the Implementation of the Teachers' Qualification in the Primary and Secondary School Teachers Professional Ethics", "University Teachers' Professional Ethics" and other regulatory documents, all have made the corresponding provisions for teachers' professional ethics. However, in the current social "transformation" and under the background of highlighting various interests in the market economic system, the teachers' professional ethics construction of our country have not kept up with the pace of the teachers' professional development, and there are still a lot of problems in different degrees, which seriously influence the construction of teachers' professionalization.

4. The Current Problems Existing in the Construction of Teachers' Professional Ethics

Teachers' professional ethics is the code of conduct and norms that teachers should follow at work. It is the essential factor of teacher's professional accomplishment, the important factor of performance level of education, and the foundation of teachers' living. In recent years, with the rapid development of our country's education and ceaseless change of society, the teachers' professional ethics is facing huge impact and severe challenges, making teachers' professional ethics construction work can't meet the demand of the specialization of teachers in many ways. Looking at the present stage on the construction of teachers' professional ethics, the author thinks that the main problems are as follows:

4.1 The Code and Requirements of Professional Ethics Lacking of Practical and Professional Uniqueness

Our country has always had a fine tradition of respecting teachers. Through the ages, Confucius is famous for his "high morality", "positive body" and "goodness", which have passed from generation to generation. This thought has deeply influenced generations of teachers, and also became the core of teachers' professional ethics in our country today. Because our country's traditional teacher professional ethics was based on teachers' professional sanctification (emperor) and the teachers' image of ethics "attached incarnate" (a day for the teacher, a lifelong father), which had excessive lofty tendency of teachers'

professional ethics. Taking the issue of teachers' professional ethics in China in 1997 as an example, its basic requirements (coaching, dedication, love of students, strict self-study, solidarity and collaboration, respecting parents, honesty on teaching, a teacher by worthy example) is still too general and abstract, whose reflection of the professional characteristics of teachers' work is not enough. Such as "law coaching" can easily be transformed into: "according to the ruling." If, in the future, we remain so to define teachers' professional ethics, it will continue to stagnate in the non-professional level of the general business ethics. This makes the construction of teachers' professional ethics requirements will remain at the level of "habitual morality" of the whole society. While ignoring the individual level of "moral introspection" and paying too little attention to the spiritual world and unique inner needs of teachers make teachers' professional ethics too idealistic, and lack of realistic and professional uniqueness.

4.2 The Lack of Operation and Supervision of the Construction of Professional Ethics' Evaluation Mechanism

At present, although most schools have set up the leading group of professional ethics, enriched the contents of the related to professional ethics, and some schools also have refined the code of conduct, the mechanism of the construction of professional ethics still lacks of effective oversight, and the majority still remain on paper and text, rarely implemented or achieve practical results. This is mainly for the following reasons: Firstly, the input leadership is not enough. Although the leading group of professional ethics of teachers is established, it has little effect. School leadership teams members are concurrently hold the school or department leadership. Most of their energies are voted to the schools' teaching and scientific research, academic degree on the construction of the so-called "hard" indexes, while they pay little attention to the "soft" indexes, such as the construction of teacher career ethics, thus the maneuverability of the construction of teachers' professional ethics is poor. Secondly, the management supervision strength is not big. Some reasonable rules and regulations of teachers' professional ethics only exist in name, and they are not well implemented. On the other hand, the construction of teachers' professional ethics has not yet formed good supervision and management mechanism. The construction only emphasizes education and guidance, lacking of effective management and supervision. Education loses touch with management and supervision to, while most people think the campus community is a block "Pure Land" people look at teachers who work in the "pure land" with admiring eyes, which leads to the lack of supervision.

4.3 The Lack of Ideal Beliefs and Professional Identity of the Construction of the Professional Ethics' Body

The formation of good teachers' professional ethics lies in that teachers can consciously internalize professional ethics and requirements in mind, putting on the line. Therefore, whether teachers have ideals beliefs or professional identity will directly affect the building of professional ethics. Currently, the main body of teachers mostly grew up during the period of reform and opening up, and have not experienced the difficult years of training, causing a considerable part of the teachers lack of firm ideals and beliefs. Secondly, economic changes affect the market. A few teachers regard teaching as a means of livelihood, and therefore, they lack of professional identity and can not be strict with them, meanwhile, lacking of teachers' consciousness. Thirdly, in some areas, the material treatment and working environment is relatively poor, so their social status is not high, which results in imbalance of some teachers' psychology. Although the teachers' economic treatment and social status has improved, there is a big gap compared with other industries on the whole. Finally, the teachers themselves have to face a variety of pressures, such as: job promotion, education and household cumbersome to improve and so on, which inevitably affect their pursuit

of career and the improvement of the professional ethics.

5. The Countermeasures of Teachers' Professional Ethics under the Background of Teachers' Specialization

For there are many problems that exist in the current construction of teachers' professional ethics, the author think that when promoting the professional development of teachers, the construction of teachers' professional ethics should be improved at the same time.

5.1 The Development of the Scientific and Rational Professional Ethics and Requirements that Adapt to Teachers' Specialization

In view of the current teachers' professional ethics in our country is too idealistic, and lack of practical and professional uniqueness, there is an urgent need to do some in-depth research of the current specifications and requirements. From the height of the pedagogy and ethics, the traditional norms and requirements should be re-examined. On the premise of teachers' specialization, the work of teachers' professional ethics and the formulation for the requirements should be developed. New system of teachers' professional ethics and the request should have profound professional ethics foundation, which can guide, specify and require teachers from the ideal, the principle and the requirements of teachers' professional ethics. Among them, the teachers' professional ethics is the highest ideal of ethics, the principles of teachers' professional ethics is the basic ethical standards, and teachers' professional ethics rules are minimum ethical requirements. In this way, the incentives for individual teacher's development are both ethical ideal, and not lack of realism, maneuverability, which adhere to the base line of ethics requirements with the highest ethical standards;⁶ the connotation of teachers' professional ethics should have professional uniqueness, and shall have the other requirements of professional ethics. It should have obvious difference, and highlight and reflect the professionalism of teachers, including the ideal of devoting to education career, high degree of social responsibility and active pursue of the spirit of professional development, etc.

5.2 The Construction of Scientific and Reasonable Supervision and Evaluation Mechanism to Adapt to the Professional Ethics of Teacher Professional Development

The supervision and evaluation mechanism of teachers' professional ethics is the platform of transforming the requirements and ethics of teachers' profession to professional ethics behavior. It is one of the important grippers of supervising teachers' professional ethics, and also it is the important guarantee of teachers' professional ethics. Before establishing a scientific supervision and evaluation mechanism of teachers' profession ethics, the correct view of supervision and evaluation view of teacher profession ethics should be established first. Operating the supervision and evaluation of teachers' professional ethics is not to put pressure on teachers, not to mandatory constraint the teacher's words and deeds, and also not to mold the teachers, but provide help and reference for the ascension of teachers' professional ethics. Secondly, supervision and evaluation content should be diversified. It should not solely rely on the leadership to carry out supervision and evaluation. It also can't replace the evaluation of teachers' professional ethics behavior with students score. The all-round supervision and evaluation of their professional ethics, professional moral emotion and ethical behavior should be paid much attention to. Secondly, the methods of supervision and evaluation should be diversified. Supervision of teacher's should be attended by the society, schools and parents. The evaluation of teachers should not only focus on the quantitative evaluation, but also carry out qualitative evaluation, making teachers know his own self and experience the joy of moral education, and

improving their own level of professional ethics in self-evaluation and peer evaluation. Finally, the results of teachers' professional ethics evaluation should be carefully analyzed, and make a feedback to the teacher so as to be recognized. In that way, professional ethics education can play its incentive evaluation function in guiding teachers' attention to their own professional ethics training, and guide them to the lofty realm of ethical development.

5.3 Creating a Favorable Cultural Environment to Highlight the Subject Status of Teachers

The formation and development of moral is a process for educator to produce moral motivation and needs, and finally demonstrates good moral behaviors by the code of ethics' internal digestion, selecting, and reflection. This kind of process requires a pedagogue's active participation and independent construction.⁷ Effective moral education must be people-oriented. It should understand, respect, trust and care people, and it should also encourage people's independent development, so as to develop the mind and improve people's moral. The formation and development of teachers' professional ethics, in essence, needs teachers' love and loyalty to their professional from the heart. Only if a teacher achieve the unity of self-value and social value, and meanwhile, society pay attention to and meet the material interests and spiritual requirements of the individual teacher, the state of teachers' professional ethics can be effectively improved. Effective teachers' professional ethics education, therefore, should be full of respect for the teacher's subjectivity, and give full play to teachers' autonomy, initiative and creativity. It should also pay attention to the teacher's individual differences, and ultimately achieve the goal of being "individualized".

Notes:

1. Wan Yong, *Recommendations on the Status of Teachers* [J]. Foreign Educational Materials, 1984 (4). Retrieved from <http://210.41.192.32/kcms/detail/detail.aspx?recid=&FileName=WGJN198404000&DbName=CJFD7993&DbCode=CJFQ&uid=aHladUVNRURiNnBqQUZneENhdIA4QSswZUhVa0VnanA2eFMxVVBnQ0VPa2xSUVF2>
2. Chuanbao Tan. *On Teachers' "Professional Ethics" Transfer to "Professional Ethics" Concept*. Educational Research, 2005 (1) Retrieved from <http://210.41.192.32/kcms/detail/detail.aspx?recid=&FileName=JYYJ200501009&DbName=CJFD0305&DbCode=CJFQ&uid=aHladUVNRURiNnBqQUZneENhdIA4QSswZUhVa0VnanA2eFMxVVBnQ0VPa2xSUVF2>
3. Durkheim (translated by Qudong). *Social Division of Labor Theory* [M]. Beijing Sanlian Bookstore, 2000.2.
4. Yongming Chen, etc. *Teacher Education Research* [M]. East China Normal University Press, 2003.
5. Chengyin Li. *On Morality under the Professionalization of Teachers*. Educational Theory and Practice [J], 2007, Volume 27. Retrieved from <http://210.41.192.32/kcms/detail/detail.aspx?recid=&FileName=JYLL2007S2014&DbName=CJFD0608&DbCode=CJFQ&uid=aHladUVNRURiNnBqQUZneENhdIA4QSswZUhVa0VnanA2eFMxVVBnQ0VPa2xSUVF2>
6. Qingfeng Wang, Juxiang Yang. *On Teachers' Professional Ethics and the Professional Development of Teachers*. Journal of Qinghai Normal University (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition) [J], 2008 Section 2. Retrieved from <http://210.41.192.32/kcms/detail/detail.aspx?recid=&FileName=QHSZ200802031&DbName=CJFD0608&DbCode=CJFQ&uid=aHladUVNRURiNnBqQUZneENhdIA4QSswZUhVa0VnanA2eFMxVVBnQ0VPa2xSUVF2>