

The Thinking and Innovation in Talent Training Mode of Applied Psychology in Local Colleges and Universities

From the Perspective of Practical Teaching

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Abstract—This paper analyzed the main problems in the applied psychology talent training in local colleges and universities from the perspective of the practical teaching, and put forward some practical strategies according to our practice, in order to offer reference to cultivate high-quality professional psychology students in colleges and universities.

Keywords—psychology; practical teaching; talent training; local colleges and universities

I. INTRODUCTION

In modern society, different people have different views on the functions of colleges and universities. Some people believe that they have three major functions, namely, talent training, scientific research and serving society [1]. Some people believe that talent training, scientific research, social services, cultural heritage and innovation are four things that they need to do, for it is the mission of university [2]. Although different people have different views, the majority of scholars accepted that talent training, scientific research and social services were the basic functions of modern university. At present, our higher education has turned from the elite education stage quickly to mass education stage. In this context, how should we position the functions of local colleges and universities (referring to local common undergraduate colleges and universities in this paper)?

As is known to all, compared with universities in big cities and key universities in China, local colleges and universities relatively lack resources. This difference determines that it is hard for local colleges and universities to go the way of elite talent training. So, we should focus on the cultivation of high-quality applied talents, and better combine the reality of local places to serve for local economic and social development. To this end, the author believes that the main functions of local colleges and universities should be talent training and social services. With the development of China's economy and the progress of social civilization, the application of psychology is increasingly expanded and psychology has become more and more important. From the individual level, people may need

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the applied psychological service in their study, education and healthy growth or when facing other issues at every stage of life. From the group level, it needs applied psychology talents to build a good family atmosphere, community life, school spirit and class spirit, enterprise team, military morale and etc. [3]. From the social level, the changes of values in social development, the cultivation of core socialism values, the psychological adjustment of migrant workers and their children, and harmonious society construction are all inseparable from the active participation of applied psychology talents. And of course, if we want to solve these problems scientifically, reasonably and practically, we should train high-quality applied psychology talents. They shall have solid professional knowledge, and fully master practical skills and ability corresponding to talent cultivation orientation.

So, how can colleges and universities strengthen practical teaching and cultivate more high-quality applied psychology professionals, to better serve the local economic and social development? The author thinks that we should first make clear the main problems existing in the practical teaching, and then combine with the local reality to carry on targeted teaching reform and innovation.

II. MAKING CLEAR THE MAIN PROBLEMS EXISTING IN THE PRACTICAL TEACHING

Practical teaching usually includes experiment, practice, probation, practical training and graduation thesis project. Psychology is an experimental science, and many of its theories come from experiments. A large number of psychological phenomena can be revealed and corroborated by experiments [4]. Therefore, the experimental teaching plays an important role in the practical teaching of psychology, and it is also an important link to cultivate students' ability of experiment and practice. Although many local colleges and universities have set up the corresponding experiment / practice course of psychology, also have the corresponding practical teaching, but there are still some general problems.

A. Less Practice Course and Old Teaching Contents

In recent years, many local colleges and universities increased the psychological experiments and practical courses due to the needs of the major development and evaluation of teaching. But courses with real experiment and practice teaching are few. And most of the experiments are still traditional verification experiments. Even if they carry out the comprehensive and designing experiments, most of the experiments are the integration and deepening of original verification experiments in a certain extent. They lack comprehensive and design innovations. In addition, the experimental (practice) hours fail to be executed according to the talent cultivation plans. There are only a few simulated and actual practical teaching activities due to the limit of the conditions. Performance assessment and evaluation lack quantitative basis.

B. Single Practice Teaching Mode and Less Practice Teaching Base

The psychological experiments and practice teaching of most local colleges and universities still basically follow this mode. First of all, teachers explain relevant experimental theoretical knowledge, methods and steps. Then, ask students to carry out group experiments or simulated training. Finally, ask students to write experimental reports or practical training summaries. For mental health education courses of strong application, teachers would take professional students to primary and secondary schools, and kindergartens for one or two visits (practices). The single fixed teaching mode is difficult to increase students' enthusiasm and initiative. There are only a few practical skill training hours. It is difficult to improve students' reflection and innovation ability.

For the development of practical teaching base for students of psychology majors, local colleges and universities basically locate in primary and secondary schools. Few of them would extend to local governments, communities and corporate enterprises. Therefore, the useful practice teaching bases with real cooperation intention is still less, and the field involved is narrow.

C. The Insufficient Fund for Practical Teaching and Laboratory Construction

The shortage of funds is one of the difficulties in the local colleges and universities. In recent years, many schools have strengthened the laboratory construction, and began to attach importance to practical teaching. But their focuses are still concentrated in well developed technology disciplines (such as, biology, chemistry, physics, and so on). In the practical teaching of psychology and laboratory construction, the investment is obviously insufficient. The very limited number of experimental field and laboratory instruments is difficult to meet the needs of many students for experiments. Several colleges and universities with psychology major don't even have a relatively standardized professional laboratory. There are many reasons for the shortage of funds. There are two main points. First, psychology has dual characteristics of humanities and natural science. Many non-professional leaders and related persons consider it as humanistic and social science. They think it doesn't need laboratories and it only needs a few

experiments and practical teaching, so they think little of it. Second, as a new rising discipline, psychology became independent late, and only has less than 140 years of history. Its development in local colleges and universities is also late. And this major generally is set under the education department or secondary education faculty. In this specialty construction, compared with education disciplines and other mature disciplines, the construction and development of psychology usually be in inferior position.

III. REFORM AND INNOVATION OF THE PRACTICAL TEACHING MODE OF PSYCHOLOGY IN LOCAL COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

A. Revising Talent Training Plan and Reforming the Practice Course System

At present most local colleges and universities with psychology major began to set the practice course system in the talent training plan. But most of their practices are classroom experiments with few class hours and few times. And they are demonstrative and verified experiments. To change this situation and increase students' interests in experiments and research exploration, we should reform and advance with the times, and revise the talent training plan. Colleges and universities should increase teaching courses, such as, "developmental psychology", "educational psychology", "social psychology", "management psychology" and "counseling psychology", and teaching hours according to practical situation. In all these courses, we should carry out relevant experiments and practical teaching on the basis of theory teaching, for it can deepen students' understanding on learnt knowledge, and exercise students' experiment operating ability and practical skills. If possible, colleges and universities could purchase "psychological counseling skills assessment program software" to carry out onsite test on mental health education students about their psychological diagnosis and evaluation skills, individual psychological counseling and coaching skills, making practical skills assessment more scientific and objective.

B. Optimizing Experimental Teaching Content and Encouraging Students to Carry out Innovative Experimental Research

In the design of the experimental course, the content is very important. Teachers should give students advanced, practical skills training [5]. In the setting of experimental courses, professional teachers should streamline the demonstrative and verified experiments, and broaden the scope and type of experiments, gradually extended to design, applied and comprehensive experiments in young children's cognition and language development, teaching psychology, and criminal psychology. For example, teachers could ask students design experiments by themselves to study Jean Piaget's theory whether there is cross-culture difference or difference of times in children's cognitive development stage when they teach the experiments and theories in the chapter of "Children's Cognitive Development" in "Developmental Psychology". In courses of "Cognitive Psychology", teachers could arrange design experimental research to students and ask them to

complete it in groups (3~5 students a group). Teachers could ask students to change one or two independent variables on the basis of some classic experimental research, or design experiment with materials keeping up with the times and loved by the students, and complete a real experimental research according to the procedures. Practice shows that this type of work increased students' enthusiasm and initiative in participating experiments. Many experiment groups selected network buzzword, various types of pictures (landscape pictures, photos of celebrities, QQ expressions, etc.) as materials, transform the present time, the number of memorization items, and other variables, further explore / verify the serial position effect of long memory and the information extraction mechanism of short-term memory.

C. Expanding Practical Teaching Mode to Train Applied Talents

The main function of local colleges and universities is to train high-quality applied talents, and to better serve the local education and regional economic development. Therefore, local colleges and universities should make full use of and integrate local resources, broaden the scope of practical teaching, extend practical teaching to local primary and secondary schools (kindergartens), enterprises, governments, communities and other departments in the training of psychology talents, so that students could find problems in natural and social situations, and use their knowledge and skills to help teachers of primary and secondary schools and relevant management personnel to better solve some practical problems. In this way, we can cultivate more useful service talents [6-7].

1) Cooperating with local basic education system and training mental health education / counseling talents

Some expert thinks, according to the reality and needs in the construction of our socialist primary stage, psychology specialty should be mainly engaged in training of applied talents of mental health education for primary and secondary schools in a considerable period in the future [8]. This point is particularly suitable for the training objective of psychology in local colleges and universities, for their main talent demand and service objects are local primary and secondary schools. If possible, they could expand to kindergarten.

To achieve this goal, the psychological department of my college has signed cooperation agreements with ten more primary and secondary schools and kindergartens in three cities of Chaoshan Region. In recent years we select junior students of psychology major to carry out probation and practice activities in several middle schools in Chaozhou every year. The main objects are the second-year students of middle school. Generally we arrange one students of psychology major for one class to help head teacher and subject teachers to carry out some psychological counseling activities. In the activities, professional student would assist psychological teacher and head teacher to explain middle school students some topics (such as, self cognition, emotion regulation, time management, etc.) closely related to teenagers' psychological development, and play games with students regularly or irregularly. Sometimes they would explain some classic and

interesting psychological experiments and psychological phenomena, such as, visual illusion experiment, color blending experiment, expectation effect and broken window effect, in real life or education process. After the test, they would give some measures and tactics to help these students improve their cognitive ability and character.

2) Cooperating with local enterprises to train human resources management talents

The production and operation activities of enterprises mainly include materials management and human resources management. In recent times, science and technology and information develop rapidly. The management of people is especially important. It is the key and core for the sustainable development of the enterprise. It involves the development and coordination of personnel relations, personnel selection and incentive, the development of human's potential and leadership psychology. Of course, for students of psychology major, it is not enough to just learn the theoretical knowledge of human resource management. They should have practical experience in enterprises (companies). For college students at school, it is not realistic to stay in enterprises for long-term practice. Therefore, we can arrange high-grade students to local large enterprises and companies for probation (junior students) and practice (senior students). They could help teachers to give some group counseling training on corporate leaders and staff. If necessary, they can discuss with departments of enterprises on how to improve product competitiveness from the perspective of production, packaging, advertising and etc., in order to increase the satisfaction of consumer on products. These practical activities not only can deepen students' understanding on the theoretical knowledge of "Management Psychology", "Psychology of Consumption and Advertising" and other disciplines, but also exercise their ability to combine theory with practice, and solve problems creatively. At same time, they could further develop the production, teaching and research cooperation. Enterprises provide funds and entrust professional teachers and students to carry out scientific research, and then transform the research results into productive forces to enhance the competitiveness of the enterprise products, construct excellent enterprise culture, and finally realize win-win goal for both schools and enterprises.

3) Joining hands with the local governments to train psychological talents for communities

Only by winning over the help and support of all sectors of society, can practical teaching help students to serve society and improve their abilities, which is particularly important for local colleges and universities lacking funds for running school. In terms of applied psychology, students enter into society, so that they can deeply feel the practical charm of psychology. Therefore, we should cooperate with communities in practical teaching process, with the principles of "serving the society and realizing all-win goal", and win over the support of governments, and exchange service for excising opportunity and resources. In this way we can solve the problem of lacking practical teaching base, and provide professional help and service to local governments [9]. This mode could not only provide short psychological assistance to "left-behind

children” in countryside, “migrant children” in cities and elderly groups. It can promote the psychological healthy development of rural residents and community residents, and contribute to building a harmonious community and good society. Colleges and universities could adjust targets and ideas in running school according to the needs of society.

IV. CONCLUSION

The Ministry of Education put forward that the training objective of applied psychology for undergraduate is to “train senior professional personnel with basic theory, basic knowledge and basic skills of psychology, able to undertake teaching, management, counseling, treatment, technological development and other jobs in education, engineering design, industrial and commercial enterprises, medical institutions, judicial departments and administration departments”. The experimental teaching is a necessary approach to train high-quality applied psychology talents. Therefore, local colleges and universities should make clear existing problems, make full use of local resources, and learn from others' strong points to offset own weakness, and then deepen the reform of experimental teaching targetedly, so that the training objective of high-quality applied psychology talents can be truly realized.

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