

Support System Research on the Professional Development of Outstanding Teachers

Qingkun Liu*

Ningbo Childhood Education College, Ningbo, Zhejiang, China

*Corresponding Author.

Abstract: The professional development of teachers is a relative development, influenced by various factors such as "time, space, and group". The professional literacy of teachers includes dimensions such as educational beliefs, educational theories and models, and professional leadership. Outstanding teachers are renowned educators within a specific administrative region, over a certain period, and within a particular group. They possess strong educational beliefs, have developed personalized educational theories and models, and actively lead other teachers to improve their teaching practices and achieve professional growth. However, outstanding teachers are not born but are cultivated through nurture. Their professional development requires support in various aspects, including institution, professional learning, and leadership practice. By constructing a professional development support system for outstanding head teachers within a regional scope, it provides experiential support for the construction of professional development support systems for outstanding teachers in general, including "institution support systems, professional learning systems, and leadership practice systems".

Keywords: Outstanding Teachers; Head Teacher; Professional Development; Professional Support; Practical Exploration

1. Introduction

Outstanding teachers refer to those teachers with high personal qualities, outstanding educational and teaching skills, and obvious leading and exemplary roles within a specific region. They represent the advanced stage of teachers' professional development. The concept of outstanding teachers is relative,

characterized by the relativity of "time, space, and group." That is, outstanding teachers are distinguished teachers of a specific time, specific administrative region, and specific subject teacher group. For example, outstanding teachers in Ningbo are selected every three years, based on the subject, and the outstanding teachers selected will be awarded the title of a certain subject master. Up to now, Ningbo had 89,000 full-time teachers in primary and secondary schools, among which there were about 500 teachers with titles such as Provincial Special-grade Teachers and Municipal Subject Masters, accounting for about 5.6%. It is evident that outstanding teachers are scarce within the regional range of the primary and secondary school teacher workforce. They serve as the leading talents in the tiered teacher team of the region, tasked with leveraging their professional capital to drive the professional development of the teacher community, thereby enhancing the overall learning quality of students and promoting a transformation in the educational quality of basic education schools. In this sense, the selection of outstanding teachers requires a professional quality index system, selection process, and the professional development of outstanding teachers requires a specific support system. In this paper, the support system for the professional development of outstanding teachers is mentioned, which is a subject teacher quality enhancement system under the guidance of specific quality indicators and supported by multiple resources.

2. Professional Competence Index System for Outstanding Teachers

Teacher professional standards generally divide teacher quality into dimensions such as professional characteristics, professional knowledge, and professional capabilities [1-3]. Teachers at different stages of professional

development also show significant differences in professional qualities. The process of growing from a novice teacher to an outstanding teacher is the process of individual teachers' advancement in professional qualities. In terms of professional traits, outstanding teachers have stronger educational beliefs. They set the education goal as the improvement of all students' literacy and personal development, and regard education as a mission to promote human and social progress. In terms of professional knowledge, outstanding teachers are active creators of educational knowledge. They form personalized educational theories and models, actively promote the integration of educational theories, others' experiences, and self-practice, and form personalized practical knowledge through research practice and practice research. In terms of professional capabilities, outstanding teachers are not only good at subject education and teaching work but also lead other teachers in the region to improve teaching behaviors and achieve professional development based on their own educational beliefs, educational theories, and models. The above considerations are confirmed in the selection of Provincial Special-grade Teachers and Municipal Subject Masters. For instance, the selection of Zhejiang Province Special-grade Teachers requires candidates to have firm political literacy, noble teacher ethics, personalized educational propositions, distinct educational styles, and significant demonstrative roles. In the selection of Ningbo City's Subject Masters, the educational beliefs of candidates are depicted through the recognition of teacher ethics and comprehensive honors, their professional knowledge is depicted through educational research achievements and teaching competition achievements, and their professional capabilities are depicted through the number of public classes and lectures they conduct. Therefore, the index system of the professional qualities of outstanding teachers includes educational beliefs, educational theories and models, professional leadership [4,5] ((e.g., Table 1. Professional competence index system)). Educational beliefs include teachers' concepts of subject teaching, the relationship between education and student development and social progress, etc. Educational theories and models include

teachers' cognitive recognition of subject and teaching theories, practical cognition of subject education, refined cognition of teaching practice models, cognitive recognition of student subject learning, and cognitive recognition of student subject achievement evaluation. Professional leadership includes cognitive recognition of teacher professional development, teacher professional learning, design and implementation of professional development activities, and cognition of teacher development evaluation.

For Example:

Table 1. Professional Competence Index System

Dimension of accomplishment	Observation index
Educational beliefs	Concepts of subject teaching, student development, social progress, Concepts of the relationship between education and students, society
Teaching theory and models	Rational cognition of subject knowledge and teaching knowledge, systematic practical cognition of subject teaching, condensed cognition of self-practice models, cognition of student subject learning, cognition of student achievement evaluation
Professional leadership	Cognition of teacher professional development, cognition of teacher professional learning, cognition of professional development activity design and implementation, cognition of teacher development evaluation

3.Support System for the Professional Development of Outstanding Teachers

The process of teachers becoming outstanding teachers is a process of gradual advancement in teachers' educational beliefs, teaching theories and models, and professional leadership. This requires continuous stimulation and guidance from external factors, continuous self-professional learning, and active educational practice and leadership

practice in the teacher's practice field. From this perspective, the professional development support system for outstanding teachers includes policy support systems, professional learning systems, and leadership practice systems [6], etc.

3.1 Institution Support System

The institution refers to the policies issued by the education administration on student development, education and teaching, teacher development, etc. The institution support system for teacher professional development includes policy texts, policy-making or implementing institutions, and policy-making or executing experts constitute. Institution texts issued by educational administrative institutions build the background information for teachers to understand, recognize, and educate teaching, students, and self-development. At the same time, they form the external motivation system for teachers to develop their educational beliefs, improve their educational and teaching practices, and enhance their professional leadership. The evolutionary dynamic release of policy texts guides the enhancement of teachers' literacy and keeps pace with the development of the times. Policy-making, implementing institutions and experts are the makers of policy texts and they are also the promoters of the integration of new requirements for student literacy and teacher literacy proposed by social development into school teaching. The policy support system guides teachers' professional quality enhancement by formulating new policy texts, constructing new standard systems, drafting new assessment indicators, and providing policy consultation or educational evaluation, which is an indirect support and assistance.

3.2 Professional Learning Support System

The knowledge required for teachers to carry out educational teaching is a practical knowledge rather than theoretical knowledge. The knowledge is the product of the deep integration of educational policies, theoretical achievements, and practical achievements with self-educational practice. It is a practical knowledge that truly guides the conduct of self-educational teaching and educational practice activities. Teachers obtain the knowledge through practical research and

research practice. Therefore, institutions, individuals, courses, resources naturally constitute the support system for teachers' professional learning, which play a supportive role in the generation and improvement of teachers' practical knowledge. In this paper, institutions include universities, educational training institutions, educational research institutions, etc., individuals include university teachers, educational researchers, teacher trainers, experienced and excellent teachers. Courses include offline intensive learning courses for teachers, online learning courses, teacher research support activities, teacher opinion exchange activities, etc. Resources include expert course resources, online course resources, high-quality research resources, typical educational advocacy resources, etc. Teachers' professional development includes self-practice research and learning activities supported by the professional learning system, and is usually progressed through learning activities such as "topic guiding, subject guiding, experience exchange, opinion summarization".

3.3 Leadership Practice Support System

Teacher leadership refers to the ability of teachers to guide and lead the professional development of others with their professional capital. The manifestation of leadership is mediated by the learning activities constructed by teachers, including showcasing or lecturing on their own experiences, guiding others in educational practices or research, and exchanging viewpoints under the guidance of specific topics. Teachers with professional capital can only enhance their leadership effectiveness by providing personalized assistance to learners in order to meet their developmental needs or address real-life practice issues. Teacher leadership is not innate but acquired through continuous leadership practices during the process of professional development, which may involve designing and implementing training activities, hosting studio activities, and conducting forum exchanges. Therefore, the practice platform, education experts, teacher development organizations, and training project resources collectively form the support system for teacher leadership practices. The practice platform includes platforms for designing and implementing training projects, conducting

studio activities, and organizing forum exchanges. Educational experts refer to college teachers, educational research experts, and teacher trainers who can help teachers improve practical leadership. Teacher development institutions specifically refer to institutions that can help teachers improve their cognition of teacher professional development, improve the quality of training projects, and enhance the quality of their research results. Training project resources refer to human resources, project plan resources, and research results related to typical teacher professional development projects.

4. Practical Exploration of the Professional Development of Outstanding Teachers

The following paper takes the construction of the professional development support system for outstanding head teachers as an example to elaborate on relevant practical explorations. Head teachers are a special group in Chinese basic education, serving dual roles as subject teachers and student growth mentors. The various systems mentioned below are professional development support systems under specific administrative divisions.

4.1 Integrated Construction of the System of Policies and Professional Standards for Outstanding Head Teachers

The education administration department in which the situated is located has been systematically constructing a policy support system for outstanding head teachers since 2018. It has researched and issued policy documents to guide various educational administrative departments and grassroots schools under its jurisdiction to formulate corresponding policies and incentive systems to support head teacher groups. These policies also include preferential treatment in terms of salary, job title promotion, and honor evaluation. At the same time, through administrative promotion, an honor advancement system for head teachers has been established, including categories such as novice head teachers, backbone head teachers, and renowned head teachers, who enjoy corresponding honor incentive policies. A corresponding evaluation index system for head teacher professional qualities has also been formed, mainly targeting dimensions such as "teaching and educating, class

construction, educational research, self-development, and leading by example ((e.g., Table 2. Professional Standards for Outstanding Head Teachers)). "Teaching and Educating" refers to the annual performance of the head teachers in terms of school-level assessments and regional honors related to moral education and comprehensive honors. "Class Construction" refers to the performance of the classes taught by the head teachers in terms of regional achievements in class collective construction. "Educational Research" refers to the performance of head teachers in terms of research projects, paper publications, or awards. "Self-Development" refers to the performance of head teachers in terms of professional competitions in teaching disciplines, psychological health qualification certifications, and teaching and class management competitions. "Leading by Example" refers to the performance of head teachers in guiding the professional development of young head teachers within the region, as well as their performances in training activities such as lectures and open classes. The aforementioned performances are hierarchical and consistent with the administrative division hierarchy, such as paper awards that are divided into district-level, city-level, and provincial-level awards. The evaluation index system for novice head teachers focuses on assessing the performance of individual head teachers in teaching and educating, class construction, and self-development. The title of novice head teacher is a low-level honor in the professional development of head teachers, so individual head teachers can obtain corresponding quantitative scores if they achieve relevant performance in their district or county. The evaluation index system for backbone head teachers adds preliminary requirements for individual head teachers in educational research to the evaluation index system for novice head teachers, and upgrades the performance requirements in other dimensions from the district or county level to the city level, with only individual head teachers obtaining city-level related performance receiving full quantitative scores. The evaluation index system for famous head teachers adds requirements for individual head teachers in leadership and demonstration to the evaluation index system for backbone head

teachers, and raises the performance requirements in other dimensions from the city level to the provincial level, with individual head teachers obtaining provincial-level related performance receiving full quantitative scores.

For Example:

Table 2. Professional Standards for Outstanding Head Teachers

Index System	Observation Indicators
Teaching and Educating	School annual assessment performance, regional moral education honors, comprehensive honors, etc.
Class Construction	Class collective construction performance
Educational Research	Research project establishment, awards, paper publications, awards
Self-Development	Professional title certification, psychological health qualification certification, teaching and education business competitions, class management business competitions
Leading by example.	Performance in guiding the professional development of young head teachers, lectures, open classes, etc.

Additionally, the educational administrative department has issued regulations for the construction and management of renowned head teacher studios, providing policy support for outstanding head teachers to carry out leadership practice activities and establishing a regional head teacher professional development guidance center to educate and guide the professional quality enhancement of head teacher groups.

In the regulations, the educational administrative departments have set forth multifaceted requirements for renowned head teachers. Renowned head teachers are required to establish municipal-level studios to guide and assist the growth of young head teachers, with detailed requirements on the number of studio members and the methods of activity conduct. Each renowned head teacher must undertake a quota of research projects and write a certain number of papers per natural year, leading the group of head teachers at the regional level to conduct research on students and moral education activities. Renowned

head teachers should also actively undertake educational assistance across regions, helping a broader group of head teachers to enhance their professional qualities. While proposing these requirements, the regulations also ensure funding for the construction of renowned head teacher studios, stipulating that the construction funds for each studio should not be less than 20,000 yuan per year. These measures have effectively promoted the professional development of the group of renowned head teachers in Ningbo.

4.2 Collaborative Construction of the Professional Learning System for Outstanding Head Teachers

The professional learning of outstanding head teachers includes "educational beliefs, educational models and theories, and professional leadership". Educational beliefs are a series of assumptions about educational work by head teachers, forming the personal philosophical foundation to carry out class management and educational activities, and serving as the cognitive foundation for implementing class educational activities. Educational models and theories are the abstract, theoretical, and model representations of head teachers' self-educational experience, the materialized expression of head teachers' educational beliefs, and the professional foundation for the exercise of head teachers' professional leadership. Professional leadership is the professional ability of head teachers to serve the development of regional teacher groups and the improvement of school educational activities. Within the regional scope, the head teacher professional development guidance center serves as the guiding and implementing unit for head teacher professional learning, head teacher research experts and senior head teachers within or across regions are instructors. The learning curriculum system includes courses on educational beliefs, educational models and theories, and professional leadership, helping to enhance the professional quality of head teacher groups. In the specific implementation phase, educational guidance for renowned head teacher groups is provided through "topics or projects," with activities such as "topic deliberation, educational story writing, educational situation simulation, and theme class meeting design" to promote the

theorization of self-practice cognition and the practical application of relevant theories. Topical deliberation is a research-oriented debate activity conducted by head teachers, university researchers, teacher trainers, and senior head teachers around fixed topics. Participating teachers exchange and discuss their self-research cognition around fixed topics, and on this basis, they generate new cognition and form a group consensus. Educational story writing refers to the activity where head teachers write their own educational stories around discussion topics or other teachers conduct narrative research [7] activities based on an educational story of a certain head teacher. Educational situation simulation includes two parts: educational case creation and situational case simulation. Educational case creation is the process where head teachers construct their educational experiences into cases around discussion topics. Situational case simulation is the process where head teachers perform their solution strategies on-site based on case situations and deeply display the educational concepts and systematic experiences behind their actions. Theme class meeting design is the process where head teachers carry out curriculum-based class educational activities around discussion topics.

4.3 Systematic Construction of the Leadership Practice System for Outstanding Head Teachers

The main projects of outstanding head teachers' leadership practice include studio activities, training project design, guidance for young head teacher competitions, and moral education theme salons. Studio activities refer to activities such as theoretical learning, theme class meeting discussions, educational story sharing, and topic discussions, which are driven by the head teacher's professional and interpersonal capital. Training project design refers to the activity of designing head teacher training courses by outstanding head teachers. Guidance for young head teacher competitions involves activities such as "educational story writing, class management strategy refinement, theme class meeting presentation, and educational situation simulation" aimed at enhancing the professional quality and capabilities of young head teacher groups. Moral education theme salons refer to thematic

discussion activities led by outstanding head teachers on various aspects such as the development of adolescents, family education, and other issues in the new era and new situation, targeting the general public or head teacher groups. At present, the practical activities of head teacher leadership in Zhejiang Province mainly revolve around four aspects: "educational stories, class management strategies, theme class meetings, and situational simulations [8,9]." Educational stories mainly showcase the educational events of head teachers in the process of carrying out individual and collective educational activities. Through the story-telling of head teachers, they vividly metaphorize their educational concepts and strategies. Class management strategies are the systematic exposition of head teachers' educational measures around educational philosophy, class situation analysis, class development goals, practical measures, and educational effectiveness. Theme class meetings are class educational activities conducted by head teachers around specific themes. Situational simulation is the on-site performance of head teachers' educational intervention measures and the on-site interpretation of their action philosophy based on specific situational topics.

5. Conclusions

Teachers at different stages of professional development exhibit significant differences in professional literacy, which are manifested in the development of dimensions such as educational beliefs, educational theories and models, and professional leadership. This study takes the construction of a professional development support system for outstanding class teachers within a municipal area as an example, demonstrating the practical exploration of how a "policy support system, professional learning system, and leadership practice system" work together to promote teachers' professional development. This can provide a reference for the construction of a general teacher professional development support system.

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