Humble Opinion on the Construction of Teachers Team in Privately-run Universities

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Keywords: Privately-run universities, Teachers team, Existing problems, Countermeasure.

Abstract. This paper explains and demonstrates how to solve the problems in the construction of teachers team in privately-run universities. On the basis of analyzing the current development of privately-run universities in China and the construction of teachers team in privately-run universities, this paper explored the existing problems and causes in the construction of teachers team. The construction of teachers team is an important factor that affects the healthy development of privately-run universities, which directly determines the quality of talents fostering in privately-run universities. Continuously strengthening the construction and optimizing the structure of teachers team is an important way to promote the connotation and development of privately-run universities.

Definition of Privately-run Universities

The privately-run universities in this paper refer to the general universities set by social organizations, corporate entities or individuals other than the government in accordance with the relevant laws of the State and the relevant regulations of setting schools. Accordingly, privately-run universities should have the following elements: First, the investors of the school, that is to say the sponsors are the non-governmental organizations. The source of funds for running the school is mainly from social organizations and other self-financing; Second, the school must be run in accordance with the law. All activities of running school must strictly follow the requirements of the State education authorities, accept the management and supervision of the State education authorities and obtain corresponding educational qualifications; Third, students of privately-run universities enjoy the same treatment as students of state-run universities. They are enrolled in the national plan and protected by the laws of State in the fields of employment, postgraduate entrance examination, etc. Fourth, schools have greater autonomy in the settings of majors, the orientation of running school, the recruitment of teachers and other aspects. Under the guidance of the higher education management departments, schools can make flexible treatment of school activities, according to their own practical condition and the need for talent in social and economic development.

Composition of Teachers Team in Privately-run Universities

Because privately-run universities cannot acquire and supplement teachers through the way of examinations of staffing of government affiliated institutions, the teachers teams in them are generally composed of the following parts:

Retired Teachers of State-run Universities

Among the retired teachers of state-run universities, a considerable number of them are in good health. For the sake of the development of education, they are willing to continue to exert their own advantages and contribute to the development of private higher education. Moreover, those teachers have high academic qualifications, professional titles and rich experience of education, teaching and management. They are familiar with the development law of higher education and are beneficial complements to teachers teams of privately-run universities, who play an important role in strengthening the teachers team and optimizing the structure of teachers.
Employing In-service Teachers of State-run Universities as Part-time Teachers

In privately-run universities, because of its short development time, the teachers teams of some majors and disciplines are relatively weak. Under such circumstances, privately-run universities will seek cooperation from the state-run universities within the local region to achieve sharing resources of teachers. And in-service teachers from state-run universities undertake teaching tasks of some disciplines and majors to make up the lack of teachers.

Openly Recruiting Teachers

Open recruitment is an important measure for the establishment of teachers in privately-run universities. In order to ensure the normal conduct of teaching activities, in addition to part-time teachers and retired teachers, the fresh and previous undergraduate and graduate students who are openly recruited are the important components of the teachers team in privately-run universities. In recent years, with the continuous development and improvement of privately-run universities, the teachers from open recruitment are mainly graduate students and doctoral candidates, and the undergraduates are no longer employed.

Current Situation and Existing Problems of Teachers Team in Privately-run Universities

Privately-run universities are the important components of China’s higher education, which has made great contributions to accelerating the talent fostering of higher education and promoting the development of society and economy. Taking Shandong Province as an example, by the end of June 16, 2017, there are 12 privately-run universities, which accounted for 17.91% of all the undergraduate universities in Shandong Province. However, there are still some problems in the construction of teachers team in privately-run universities in our country, which have become important factors restricting the development of the schools.

Higher Turnover of Teachers

Because the teachers teams of privately-run universities are mainly composed of retired veteran teachers from state-run universities, part-time teachers and fresh graduate students, the structure of the teachers team lacks stability. Retired veteran teachers are likely to leave at any time due to their health; Part-time teachers can't work steadily for a long time in privately-run universities because of their own teaching tasks and work arrangements. The working treatment and development platform of privately-run universities cannot better meet the aspirations of openly recruited graduate students. Meanwhile, they lack the working experience in teaching and management. So the turnover of freshly recruited young teachers is higher, which becomes one of the existing problems of privately-run universities.

Irrational Structure of Teachers Team

At present, the structure of teachers team is irrational, which has become a typical phenomenon in privately-run universities in China. They are mainly as follows: 1) The age structure is irrational. The proportion of teachers under 35 years of age and teachers over the age of 60 in the teachers team is too high, and backbone teachers around 40 years old are fewer. So it is difficult to form a rational teaching management echelon. 2) The professional title structure is not rational. In recent years, the gap of the evaluation of professional titles between privately-run universities and state-run ones is getting smaller and smaller, but due to the restriction of the national professional titles evaluation policy and the influence of privately-run schools, the proportion of teachers with junior and intermediate professional titles in privately-run universities is too high, and the proportion of teachers with the title of associate professor or above is relatively low. In addition, the teachers with the title of associate professor or above are mainly external retired teachers, and the turnover of them is high. These conditions are not conducive to the formation of a rational professional title structure. 3) The structure of academic qualifications is irrational. Most of the privately-run universities have been promoted by
private higher vocational colleges in recent years. Many of the teachers’ first academic qualifications are undergraduate degrees or even junior colleges, and some teachers are studying for in-service masters. Generally speaking, low academic qualifications, especially the first academic qualifications, is an important factor that restricts the development of teachers teams.

**Inadequate Scientific Research Ability, Weak Scientific Research Capacity**

Privately-run universities newly open a large number of majors, accounting for a large proportion of all undergraduate majors, and the number of professional teachers is low. Influenced by the existing national policies of enrollment and admission, there is still a certain disparity in the quality of students between privately-run universities and state-run universities. Besides normal teaching tasks, some teachers also undertake burdensome management work of student. As a result, because of their own ability and the work pressure, young teachers cannot devote themselves to scientific research although they have enthusiasm for scientific research. Meanwhile, the source of funds for running schools in privately-run universities is relatively unitary, and the proportion of investment in research activities is relatively small, which also limits the improvement of scientific research ability to some extent.[3] Privately-run universities implement flexible management of teachers, especially external employed teachers. The turnover of external employed teachers and part-time teachers is high, and they can not instruct the young teachers in scientific research. As a result, it is difficult for privately-run universities to form a strong scientific research team.

**Limited Retraining and Development of Teachers**

Because the full-time teachers in privately-run universities mostly undertake the heavy work of education, teaching, student management and service, they rarely have the opportunity to go out for study and training, which has some harmful effects on the upgrading of academic qualifications, the enrichment and renewal of professional knowledge and the improvement of operational capacity. The cost of running schools in privately-run schools is limited, and the proportion of investment in teachers' training and learning is small, which is also an unfavorable factor affecting the overall quality of teachers. Meanwhile, the conditions of the title assessment requirements, the limited quotas, the shortage of full-time teachers' own scientific research ability and limited research time are also the main reasons why young full-time teachers are difficult to continue to enhance themselves and the space of their improvement is limited.

**Suggestions for Strengthening the Construction of Teachers Team in Privately-run Universities**

**Government’s Stepping up Its Support of Policy, Ensuring the Fulfillment of the Policy**

China’s “Education Law of the Peoples Republic of China” and “Law of the People's Republic of China on Promotion of Privately-run Schools” have made clear stipulations on the treatment of teachers in privately-run schools: The teachers of privately-run schools enjoy the same treatment as the teachers of state-run ones. However, in concrete implement process, due to the different personnel system and the actual conditions in different regions in our country, there are still large disparities in salary, benefits, retirement benefits and social status of teachers between privately-run universities and state-run ones.[4] In addition to their own efforts of privately-run universities, governments at all levels and educational departments in our country should actively innovate the employment mechanism, implement the law regulations on the treatment of teachers in privately-run universities, ensure the legitimate rights of teachers in privately-run universities, strive to narrow the gaps in teachers’ income, social status and other aspects between privately-run universities and state-run universities, perfect various types of insurance of teachers and the exchange system of teachers between privately-run universities and state-run ones, eliminate the worries of teachers in privately-run universities, stabilize teachers team and optimize the structure of teachers.
Increasing the Investment in the Construction of Teachers Team, Improving the Structure of Teachers

When making the annual financial budget, privately-run universities should separately budget the investment of the construction of teachers team, and increase the special investment for the construction of teachers team year by year according to the continuous development of schools. They can take measures from the following aspects: First, a high starting point, high standards. Privately-run universities should establish a strict recruitment system, vigorously introduce high-level talents and set up a series of measures to stabilize teachers team and construct an elite and professional teaching team; Second, privately-run universities should formulate detailed and feasible training programs for teachers, and make the training for teachers standardized, sustainable and institutionalized. The training for teachers not only involves the professional knowledge and teaching skills of the subject, but also emphasizes the education of professional ethics; Third, privately-run universities can issue incentives to encourage young teachers to upgrade their academic qualifications. The universities may set up special funds to subsidize or reward the teachers who have upgraded their academic qualification, which not only can promote teachers’ academic qualifications and optimize the structure of teachers, but also can be of great significance for stimulating the enthusiasm of teachers and stabilizing teachers team. Fourth, privately-run universities should gradually improve the salary and welfare of the teachers. They should formulate scientific and reasonable incentive mechanism, focus on helping the staffs with family difficulties and earnestly solve the problems such as the teachers’ children’s entrance to the kindergarten and school.

Enhancing the Soft Power of Privately-run Universities

After the rapid and healthy development in recent years, privately-run universities have made great improvements in campus environment, quality of students and hardware facilities. With the continuous development of the schools and the practical needs of teaching, it is urgent for privately-run universities to have an energetic, skilled and experienced full-time teachers team. The universities should strive to create a working environment suitable for the growth and development of young backbone teachers, which should include a harmonious campus environment of human relations, a fair and equitable competitive environment, a good relationship between superiors and subordinates, and a strong academic environment. Meanwhile, the universities should actively innovate the management system, reform the old system which is not suitable for the development of teachers, create a people-oriented working environment, and comprehensively promote the development of teachers.

Summary

Under the new economic situation of our country, in order to develop healthily and continuously and foster more qualified talents for the social and economic development, privately-run universities must attach importance to the construction of teachers team, face the existing problems in the construction of teachers team and formulate feasible solutions, optimize the structure of teachers team and improve the comprehensive quality of teachers team.

References

