

From Teacher to Educator: Exploring the Role of Agency in the Negotiation of Teacher Identity

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Abstract: The role identity of teachers in the context of education reform has begun to change, and teachers should realize that teaching and educating go hand in hand and play their important role responsibility as soul engineers. However, the role transformation requires strong mobility, and from the present point of view, there are still some realistic dilemmas in the identity transformation of teachers. From the perspective of teachers' identity transformation, this paper discusses the mobility shown by teachers in their daily life and work. It analyses the intrinsic and extrinsic factors affecting the transformation of teachers' identity, reveals the challenges of teachers in the real dilemmas, and proposes strategies to bring out teachers' activeness.

Keywords: teacher identity, transformation, agency, real-life dilemmas

Introduction

With the deepening of education reform, teachers, as important implementers of educational activities, have become the focus of attention in the education sector for the transformation of their identity. From traditional 'teachers' to modern 'educators', the transformation of teachers' identity is not only a matter of personal growth, but also affects the quality and effectiveness of education. This calls for policy formulation and teacher training to give top priority to the dynamics of teacher identity transformation, and to help teachers, through analysis and research, to achieve the transformation of their identities from pedagogues to educators.

1. Factors influencing the transformation of teachers' identity

1.1 Intrinsic factors

1.1.1 Personal values and beliefs

If teachers hold a positive philosophy of education and identify with the value and significance of the educational endeavour, they are more likely to take the initiative to seek identity transformation. On the contrary, if teachers lack enthusiasm for and identification with education, it may be more difficult for them to achieve identity transformation in the face of external pressures and challenges.

1.1.2. Self-perception and competence

Self-perception refers to teachers' perception, evaluation and expectation of themselves. Competence, on the other hand, includes a teacher's teaching ability, communication ability, and adaptability. Teachers with good self-perception and strong competence are more likely to achieve identity transformation in the face of educational reform and teaching challenges.

1.1.3. Motivation for career development

Intrinsic motivation stems from teachers' love and interest in education, which is the internal driving force for teachers

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to realize identity change. Extrinsic motivation stems from the expectations and requirements of society, schools, families and other external environments, and is the external driving force for teachers to realize identity transformation.

1.2. External factors

1.2.1. Education policy

Changes in education policy directly affect teachers' education and teaching practice and professional development, for example, the introduction and implementation of education reform policies will promote teachers to update their education concepts and improve their teaching methods, so as to realize the change of identity. At the same time, the provisions of the education policy on the teacher evaluation system also affect the teachers' understanding and evaluation of their own profession, and the scientific evaluation system will help teachers realize the identity change^[1].

1.2.2. School environment

For example, the construction of campus culture will have a subtle influence on teachers' educational and teaching concepts and behaviors, and a positive campus culture helps teachers achieve identity transformation. In addition, the management mode of the school directly affects teachers' work pressure and career development. A scientific management model can help teachers to achieve identity change, but if the school puts too much or too little pressure on teachers, it will reduce their identity motivation.

1.2.3. Social expectations

Social expectations are one of the external factors influencing the transformation of teachers' identities, and the expectations and demands of society on teachers significantly affect teachers' perceptions and evaluations of their own profession. On the one hand, there are social expectations and evaluations of the status of the teaching profession, which influence teachers' identification with and pride in their own profession. On the other hand, there are societal expectations regarding the image of the teaching profession, which, for example, have an impact on the identity of teachers.

2. The reality of the dilemma of the transformation of teachers' identity

2.1 Complexity of the work environment and composition of students

With the development of society and the reform of education, the environment of school education is also changing. Schools are no longer mere academic venues, but front-lines where various social issues need to be addressed. Teachers need to adapt to multiple challenges such as policy changes, adjustments in school management models, and changes in the allocation of educational resources. These changes require teachers to have not only solid professional knowledge, but also good social adaptability and innovation^[2].

The diversity of students also challenges the transformation of teachers' identity. Students come from different family backgrounds and cultural backgrounds, and they have different learning needs, behavioral habits and personality traits. Teachers need to understand and respect the uniqueness of each student, and at the same time face the complexities of students' behavioral problems and psychological issues.

2.2 Increasingly stringent rules for appraisal and appointment systems

The standardization of the appointment system requires teachers to possess appropriate qualifications and conditions, such as teaching certificates and professional and technical titles. These standardized requirements have raised the threshold of the teaching profession and provided teachers with a clear path for career development, but they have also brought about a certain impact on teachers. On the one hand, the teachers' community is on edge and everyone is in danger, thinking about how to keep their jobs and not focusing on education; on the other hand, the relationship between teachers and their leaders and teachers and teachers is getting more and more tense, and teachers have become rivals and “enemies” to each other; in addition, the strict appointment system also makes the teachers' psychological burden overload, which is detrimental to teachers' physical and mental health, and is not conducive to teachers' professional development and development. On the other hand, the relationship between teachers and leaders, teachers and teachers has become more and more tense, and teachers have become competitors and enemies.

3. Dynamism in the transformation of teachers' identities

3.1 Strengthening teachers' internal motivation to fulfil themselves in self-knowledge

Internal drive is the internal motivation for teachers to achieve self-growth, and strengthening internal drive is crucial to the transformation of teachers' identity. Teachers should identify their strengths and weaknesses through self-reflection, so as to continuously adjust and optimize their teaching strategies. Self-renewal is the embodiment of teachers' internal drive, which requires teachers to maintain a learning attitude, constantly absorb new knowledge and update their educational philosophy. Teachers need to make clear career plans and set short-term and long-term goals. Through goal orientation, teachers can enhance their professional competence in a more targeted way and achieve self-achievement^[4].

In addition, teachers' emotional commitment to education and recognition of the value of education are important components of internal drive. Teachers should have a deep understanding of the significance of education and regard education as an important way to realize their personal values and social contributions. Teachers need to answer these questions for themselves: Am I a professional teacher? Am I a good teacher? Only by identifying themselves as professional teachers can they be truly clear about the direction of their future professional growth.

3.2 Strengthening environmental construction to provide environmental support for identity transformation

On the one hand, it is necessary to build a good school culture. School culture is an important external environment for teachers' identity transformation. Schools should create a cultural atmosphere that respects teachers, encourages innovation, and supports professional growth, and provides space for teachers to grow.

On the other hand, schools and education administration should provide teachers with a platform for professional development, including teaching and research activities, academic exchanges, and vocational training, to help teachers improve their professional competence and realize identity transformation.

In addition, it is necessary to establish a scientific and reasonable teacher evaluation system by taking into account the actual situation of the construction of the teaching force, which not only pays attention to the teaching results, but also pays attention to the professional growth and emotional needs of the teachers, which helps to improve the teachers' professional satisfaction and promotes the change of identity^[5].

3.3 Organizing training and learning to become leaders in the growth of students in the new era

With the development of education, teachers need to constantly update their knowledge and skills to meet the requirements of education in the new era. Teachers should actively participate in various professional training, including those on pedagogy, educational technology and curriculum design, in order to enhance their teaching and learning abilities.

In order to enhance teachers' sense of identity, schools can actively organize teachers to participate in vocational training and promote their professional development. For example, they can organize various kinds of teaching seminars and teaching observation activities, or provide material support for teachers to help them go outside for further training and study, so as to improve their teaching standards and enhance their professional self-confidence. Schools also need to organize various forms of modern educational technology training activities. Help teachers master modern educational technology, use multimedia, network and other resources to enrich teaching methods, improve teaching quality, and become a technology leader for students' growth^[6].

In addition, schools can organize team activities from time to time to encourage teachers to learn from each other, exchange teaching experience, and deal with challenges and difficulties in teaching. This can not only create a positive teaching and research atmosphere, but also provide more opportunities for teachers' identity change and promote their professional development.

4. Conclusion

To sum up, the mobility in the transformation of teachers' identity is the key to promote teachers' professional growth.

In the face of the real dilemma, teachers should respond positively, give full play to their own initiative, continuously improve the quality of education and teaching, and contribute to the cultivation of talents in the new era. At the same time, education management departments and schools should pay attention to the change of teachers' identity, provide support and guarantee for teachers, and enhance the mobility of teachers' identity change, so that they can recognise their own identities and take the initiative to change from teachers to educators, and contribute to the development of education.

Conflicts of interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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Fund project

2024 Shaanxi Provincial Research Program on Foreign Language Studies. (No.2024HZ1100).