The Impact of Professional Identity on Teaching Effectiveness Among Faculty in Local Undergraduate Institutions

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Abstract: Based on social cognitive theory, this study explores the relationship between professional identity and teaching effectiveness among faculty in local undergraduate institutions. Faculty members from four local undergraduate institutions were selected as research participants, and the study employed the Teacher Professional Identity Scale and the Teaching Effectiveness Scale as research instruments to measure the relationship between the two variables. The results indicate that professional identity has a significant positive impact on teaching effectiveness among faculty in local undergraduate institutions. Furthermore, gender, years of teaching experience, and professional title serve as background variables that influence the relationship between professional identity and teaching effectiveness.

As local undergraduate institutions continue to develop and undergo transformations, it becomes increasingly urgent to explore teachers' professional identity and its impact on teaching effectiveness. Professional identity reflects teachers' understanding of their professional roles and their personal emotional attitudes toward their work, which are closely related to their teaching performance. Teaching effectiveness, in turn, is a critical factor in evaluating both individual educational achievements and the overall quality of higher education institutions. It directly affects students' academic performance and the public reputation of the institution. Therefore, a detailed investigation into how professional identity influences teaching effectiveness among faculty in local undergraduate institutions will not only enhance the understanding of the current educational landscape but also provide valuable insights for educational policymakers.

1. Research Objectives

This study aims to explore whether professional identity affects teaching effectiveness among faculty in local undergraduate institutions and hypothesizes a correlation between the two. A survey was conducted among faculty members from four local undergraduate institutions, with teaching experience, gender, and professional title as control variables, to verify this hypothesis.The main research objectives are as follows.

(1) Examine the differences in professional identity and teaching effectiveness among faculty in local undergraduate institutions based on different background variables (e.g., years of teaching experience, gender, professional title).

(2) Investigate the impact of professional identity on teaching effectiveness among faculty in local undergraduate institutions.

2. Research Questions

Based on the research objectives, this study explores the following questions:

(1) Do different background variables (e.g., years of teaching experience, gender, professional title) influence professional identity and teaching effectiveness among faculty in local undergraduate institutions?

(2) Does professional identity impact teaching effectiveness among faculty in local undergraduate institutions?

3. Research Methodology

(1) Research hypotheses

Based on a literature review, the following research hypotheses are proposed:

H1: There are significant differences in professional identity among faculty in local undergraduate institutions based on different background variables (gender, years of teaching experience, professional title).

H1a: Gender differences influence professional identity among faculty in local undergraduate institutions.

H1b: Differences in years of teaching experience influence professional identity among faculty in local undergraduate institutions.

H1c: Differences in professional title influence professional identity among faculty in local undergraduate institutions.

H2: There are significant differences in teaching effectiveness among faculty in local undergraduate institutions based on different background variables (gender, years of teaching experience, professional title).

H2a: Gender differences influence teaching effectiveness among faculty in local undergraduate institutions.

H2b: Differences in years of teaching experience influence teaching effectiveness among faculty in local undergraduate institutions.

H2c: Differences in professional title influence teaching effectiveness among faculty in local undergraduate institutions.

H3: There is a significant positive correlation between professional identity and teaching effectiveness among faculty in local undergraduate institutions.

(2) Research participants

This study selected faculty members from four local undergraduate institutions to comprehensively examine the current state of professional identity and teaching effectiveness within this group.

(3) Research instruments

1) Teacher professional Identity scale

According to the research of Li Xiaoying and Yan Hanbing (2018), professional identity consists of career values, a

sense of belonging, and perceived competence. This structure forms a second-order single-factor model comprising three first-order factors. Based on this theoretical framework, researchers have developed the Teacher Professional Identity Behavior Tendency Scale.

2) Teaching effectiveness scale

The Teaching Effectiveness Scale used in this study was adapted from the "Personal Teaching Efficacy Scale" developed by Xin Tao et al. (1995). This self-report measure evaluates teachers' teaching effectiveness across ten items, encompassing emotional efficacy, cognitive efficacy, and behavioral efficacy.

(3) Data analysis methods

This study utilized a questionnaire survey to collect the required data. After data collection, invalid questionnaires were filtered out, and valid responses were recorded. The data were then imported into SPSS 25.0 for statistical analysis. The analytical methods included item analysis, reliability testing, validity evaluation, descriptive statistical analysis, difference testing, correlation exploration, and regression modeling. The study results were thoroughly discussed and compared with existing research to validate core hypotheses and achieve research objectives.

4. Findings and Recommendations

(1) Research findings

Based on the study conducted by Tang Shicheng on the professional identity of ideological and political educators in Chongqing universities, combined with the research findings of Duan Ting, Li Xianfang, and Gong Shaoying on the interaction between teachers' professional identity, perceived teaching effectiveness, and teaching monitoring ability, this study concludes that teachers' recognition of their professional identity significantly influences teaching effectiveness. A strong sense of professional belonging not only enhances teachers' enthusiasm and engagement in their work but also increases their sense of responsibility and focus when carrying out teaching tasks, ultimately improving overall teaching quality.

Therefore, in the process of teacher professional training and education management, emphasis should be placed on cultivating and guiding teachers to develop a positive professional identity. This approach can promote personal professional growth and development, thereby enhancing teaching quality. Furthermore, educational institutions should provide more support and incentive mechanisms to create a favorable work environment and offer ample development opportunities, further strengthening teachers' sense of professional belonging. These measures are crucial for improving the overall teaching quality and education standards in higher education institutions, such as those in Hebei Province, China.

(2) Recommendations

1) Strengthening teacher training and support

Based on the above conclusions, it is recommended that local undergraduate institutions strengthen the management and support of teaching practice programs for pre-service teachers. Increasing both the number and diversity of internship opportunities can help them better recognize and adapt to their future teaching roles. Additionally, for in-service teachers, a continuous professional development system should be established. This should include regularly scheduled professional training sessions to continuously enhance their teaching skills and professional competence.

To improve the teaching efficiency of faculty in local undergraduate institutions, reinforcing professional development training is particularly important. Regular training programs not only help teachers continuously

update their professional knowledge and skills, thus optimizing teaching quality, but also effectively enhance their professional competence, making them more aligned with the needs of modern education.

2) Creating a supportive work environment

By establishing a comfortable and dynamic workspace, institutions can effectively stimulate faculty motivation, strengthen their recognition of their professional role, and consequently enhance overall teaching quality.

Furthermore, universities should increase investment in teaching resources to ensure that all faculty members have access to state-of-the-art teaching tools, well-equipped classrooms, and ample learning materials. Facilities such as multimedia-enabled lecture halls, well-stocked libraries covering diverse academic topics, and easily accessible digital information platforms are indispensable for fostering efficient classroom instruction.

3) Innovating teaching methods

To enhance teaching effectiveness in universities across Hebei Province, exploring and adopting innovative teaching methods is of utmost importance. The "Three-Step Hybrid Teaching Model" proposed by Liu Ying et al. (2023) serves as a valuable reference for this endeavor. First, integrating both online and offline teaching approaches while fully utilizing information technology and online education resources can expand students' access to knowledge and significantly increase their learning motivation. This, in turn, indirectly boosts teachers' confidence in their teaching effectiveness.

Furthermore, encouraging peer-to-peer learning should not be overlooked. Using group discussions and collaborative learning activities enables students to share perspectives, reinforce their understanding of course content, and develop their analytical skills. Particularly, individualized instruction is crucial for meeting diverse learning needs. Teachers should strive to provide tailored support based on students' unique characteristics and learning preferences.

In summary, implementing these strategies will not only enhance the professional competence of faculty members in higher education institutions but also contribute significantly to the long-term development of the regional higher education system.

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