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# An Examination of the Attitudes of Modern Chinese Teachers Toward Their Work and Professional Development

## WANG FENGYUAN [1], DR. NIDHI AGARWAL [2a]

[1] Phd. Research Scholar Education, Lincoln University College, Malaysia

[2] Professor in Lincoln University College, Malaysia

Contact Details: dr.nidhi@lincoln.edu.my

## Abstract

In-service teachers in Guangzhou public schools will be surveyed about their opinions on professional development opportunities. Before recently, the Chinese government had stringent controls over any and all training programmes meant to advance an employee's career. Only in recent years has China started decentralising education to its provinces and cities, but this shift has had a significant impact (Chinese Embassy of Nepal, 2012; Xiaojiong, 2012; MOE, 2000).

This research is a valuable tool for architects, engineers, and other professionals involved in planning and designing new developments. It will also be helpful in gauging how faculty members feel about pursuing advanced degrees.

**Keyword:** Professional Development Opportunities, Teacher Training Programmes

## INTRODUCTION

It is possible to go back to the Shang Dynasty and find evidence of Chinese educational reform (1523 B.C. to 1027 B.C.). Changes have happened over the course of this lengthy period as societal demands have shifted. These two ideologies emerged in China during the Warring States Period (770 B.C. to 220 BC), when the country was at war with itself. These ideas shaped Chinese educational thought and practice throughout the rest of the 20th century. To achieve universal education for all of China's inhabitants, measures were taken during the end of the Qing Dynasty (1644–1911). Improved teacher training is one method China's government has made progress toward universal education since 1977.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The Ministry of Education's 5-Year Plans are presently in their eleventh iteration. The Ministry of Education believes that these initiatives will address a number of urgent issues. To be sure, many plans are impractical because of the sheer size of China's economy and social structure, which makes it difficult to deal with the issues that arise. Goals were unrealistic and sometimes not based on the reality of the money available since resources weren't put aside appropriately to assure achievement.

These strategies have been under development for a number of years prior to it. According to the Chinese National Plan for Medium-Term Education Reform and Development (2010-2010) the outline was first released in August of that year, for example (Na & Jing, 2010). There were a lot of ideas collected, and it went through forty changes before it was released in July of 2010.

Primary school curriculum were first developed in the United States in 1950. To keep up with curricular changes, they were updated four times: in 1956, in 1963, in 1978, and in 1986. It was decided to set strict requirements for elementary and senior institutions. Eight textbook sets were also produced by the People's Education Press at the same time as new standards were being established.

Since 1949, the federal government's approach to education has shifted many times. Teachers' professional development had two significant shifts in 1980. For starters, instructors now have more power to make decisions in the classrooms. In other words, they had complete control over how the material was taught. As a second benefit, local leaders now have more discretion in determining the path in which their schools should go to best serve their students and communities.

When it came to teacher education reform, the Nepalese Embassy of China issued a report from 1985 based on the findings of the Fourth National Conference. This paper emphasised the need of teacher education as a strategic development measure. **The Chinese educational system makes use of in-service programmes for teachers.**

Programs for in-service teachers include mentorship and professional development components. Mentoring is a time-honored method of assisting novice instructors by assigning them to an experienced colleague. China is a relative newcomer to teacher professional development when compared to other developed countries. They have, however, invested a significant amount of financial and intellectual resources in order to meet the political and societal demands of generating better-prepared pupils.

Researchers Xiaomei Song and Liying Cheng published an article in the Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education titled "Investigating Primary English Immersion Teachers in China: Background, Instructional Contexts, Professional Development and Perceptions" in May 2011. Several study gaps were found with relation to immersion instructors, including: educational backgrounds, instructional settings, professional development, and their perspectives of English-immersion. The majority of immersion teachers were found to be under the age of 30 and to have only had five years of teaching experience at the time of the study. These teachers had an average class size of 50 students and spent 5.8 hours a week in the classroom, according to data. A little more than a third of the professors held a master's or doctoral degree. According to the teachers, they teach in a communicative, interactive, and learner-centered way. Professional development options for immersion instructors were severely lacking. China's immersion programmes must improve if in-service and continuous programme development are to be taken into consideration.

Published in the journal Chinese Education and Society in November/December 2009, Wu Hua wrote an article entitled "Prospects of Private Education in China." A growing number of private schools are popping up, according to Hua. There were 61,200 private schools of all levels in the United States as of 2002 (excluding private training institutes). There were 93,200 of them in 2006, a 52 percent rise. The total number of pupils grew by 107 percent from 11.16 million in 2000 to 23.13 million in 2010

The Outline of China's National Plan for Medium and Long-Term Education Reform and Development 2010-2020 was issued by the Ministry of Education in 2010. The plan's end objective is to turn the country into a human resource powerhouse. This report focused on the following areas: (a) increasing the number of quality teachers; (b) promoting teacher ethics; (c) improving the professional efficiency of teachers; (d) boosting the social standing of teachers; (e) simplifying teacher administration. Building a large number of great instructors is the first step, as high-quality education necessitates having excellent teachers. Teachers' standing should be elevated, their rights protected, and their pay should be competitive with other professions. This would help to elevate teaching to a respectable position. Teachers' social position would rise as a result of this decision.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

As technology advances, the globe becomes increasingly linked. In order to stay up with the rate of change, national populations must adapt to technological advancements. Having a well-educated population is not the sole advantage; a recent tendency has been to make populations more varied in order to get an advantage in the global market. To remain competitive in an increasingly demanding employment market, many nations are reconsidering and retooling their education system to keep pace with changes in society and advances in technology. Any educational reform should put a high priority on improving the abilities of teachers (Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman &Yoon, 2001).

To satisfy this need, China implemented the Compulsory Education Law of 1986, which included objectives for test results and a range of policy measures aimed at improving scores (Surowski, 2000). The ultimate objective was to produce more productive people with superior educational backgrounds. Examining the test scores of pupils is a well-accepted procedure. Professional development is viewed by Chinese officials as a crucial instrument in the country's effort to improve its educational system. In order to improve pupils' exam scores, China has placed greater emphasis on professional growth (Huang, 2004).

### Objective of the Study
- To find out any significant difference in the attitudes of teachers toward professional development based on the years of experience.

### Research Questions

- Do years of experience influence the attitude of teachers based on the age of teachers?

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For the purposes of determining if statistically significant differences exist between groups based on gender, participant age, and number of years of teaching experience, statistical assessments will be used in this study.

## RESEARCH DESIGN

This study will take a quantitative approaches approach. Dr. Kathleen Flanagan-Hudson developed the tool, Attitude Toward In-Service Scale (Trueblood, 1986).

Permission to utilise the survey will need to be obtained from Dr. Flanagan-Hudson, who may give it. Teachers will be asked to fill out surveys using Qualtrics Survey Research Suite at the University of Arkansas. Once the survey was downloaded, it was sent to all of the school's instructors.

There were 25 in-service questions, plus 6 demographic ones from the first survey. The instrument, on the other hand, will be re-created in Mandarin for use by teachers who speak that language.

## DATA ANALYSIS

In an effort to address the following research questions, this study conducted statistical analyses to establish whether or not there were statistically significant differences between groups defined by gender, age of participants, and years of teaching experience.

- How much of a difference does a teacher's age make in how they approach the classroom?
- How much do you think instructors' outlooks shift as they gain experience?
- In what ways could teachers' perspectives vary depending on a student's gender?
- Does the age of the instructor have any bearing on whether or not they have a positive or negative attitude toward students of either gender?
- Does the age of instructors have any bearing on how they approach their jobs?

*Breakdown of Demographics by Age, Mean and Standard Deviation*

| Level of Age | *n* (Percent) | Mean of Answers | Std. Dev. of Answer |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 61 (.13) | 3.21 | 0.54 |
| 2 | 160 (.34) | 3.63 | 0.45 |
| 3 | 136 (.29) | 3.89 | 0.21 |
| 4 | 108 (.23) | 3.90 | 0.20 |

*note.* $n = 435$; numbers rounded to nearest hundredth.

The age range of respondents is presented in a table with four distinct categories. Teachers who were 30 or younger were assigned the nominal identification 1. The percentage of educators that fell within this group was 13% (61). The median response was 3.34 years old. This shows that the median response for all survey items in this age bracket was 3.34. There was only a 0.56 standard deviation in the data. Teachers who were between the ages of 31 and 40 were assigned the nominal identifier 2. There were 160 educators who self-identified as such. There was a variance of 0.47 standard deviations. There were 3 professors who were between the ages of 41 and 50, therefore that's what the nominal identification 3 stands for. There were 136 educators who self-identified as such. A value of 0.22 was obtained for the standard deviation. Teachers who were 51 or older were assigned the notional identifier 4. To be exact, 108 educators self-identified as such. The sample's standard deviation was 0.21.

The table shows that the majority of respondents aged 35 and older were in the agree or strongly agree camp. The standard deviation for children aged one to four went down from 0.56 to 0.21.

*Breakdown of Demographics by Level of Years of Experience, Mean and Standard Deviation*

| Levels of Years of Experience | n Percent | Mean of Answers | Std Dev of Answers |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 91 (0.2) | 3.25 | 0.53 |
| 2 | 158 (0.34) | 3.74 | 0.38 |
| 3 | 109 (0.24) | 3.89 | 0.21 |
| 4 | 105 (0.23) | 3.90 | 0.21 |

*note.* n= 463; Numbers rounded to nearest hundredth.

Table 12 divides test takers' cumulative years of experience into four categories, according to how long they've been using the tool. When asked how many years of experience they had in the classroom, instructors who said five or less years were assigned the notional identity 1. A total of 91 educators self-identified as being in this group. The nominal identity of 2 indicates instructors who reported having six to fifteen years of experience. A total of 158 educators self-identified as such. For instructors who reported having between 16 and 25 years of experience, the nominal identification 3 corresponds to this range. A total of 109 educators self-identified as such. Nominally, 4 stands for the number of professors who reported 26 years of experience or more. Among the 105 educators who self-identified as such, a majority were female.

The average of the first group is 3.38, and the standard deviation is 0.55. The average of Group 2 is 3.9, but their standard deviation is only 0.4. The average years of experience in Group 3 is 4.05 and in Group 4 it is 4.06. This suggested that the more seasoned educators agreed with the questions more frequently. Group 3 teachers had a 0.21 standard deviation, while Group 4 teachers had a 0.22 standard deviation, indicating that they were more likely to respond with an agree or strongly agree response.

**CONCLUSION**

In this investigation, researchers in Guangzhou, China aimed to better understand how teachers there feel about their opportunities for professional development. We used their employment data to reach out to one in three educators and ask for their participation in the study. If that's the case, they should have received an email with the survey's URL before they arrived on campus. It has been proposed that there be 479 participants in the study. The survey has been completed with 100% participation from teachers, and the findings are currently being reviewed to ensure all questions have been answered.

## LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Only high schools in Guangzhou will be included in the study. This means the researcher may have to rely on school officials to collect data when they are not present during survey administration. Cecil Trueblood and Kathleen Flanagan Hudson initially developed the Attitudes toward In-Service Education Scale in 1981. (Trueblood, 1986). Teacher Attitude Survey to Gauge Instructional Strategies and Classroom Pedagogy in Support of Larger Outcome-based Evaluation Efforts was developed by Kathryn E. H. Race to represent her study's research (Race, 2001). Liao translated Dr Races' survey into Mandarin and discovered that when given in Taiwan, it had a reliability value of 0.93. (Liao, 2003). It was necessary to get in touch with Dr Kathleen Flanagan Hudson, who gave her consent for the study to be used. All of the instructors in the city of Guangzhou are included in this sample. There is a possibility that the title of the original survey research will be modified to reflect changes made in an effort to accommodate cultural differences. These survey questions will be used to gather information. Self-reporting was used for the questionnaires.

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