

Current Situation, Problems and Countermeasures of Professional Development of Middle School English Teachers in Rural Areas of Western China

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Abstract: *In order to explore the current situation of rural middle school teachers' training and professional development in the county, this paper carries out the corresponding research on the form and professional development of primary middle school teachers in the county. Then, combined with SPSS25 and Excel software for data statistics and analysis. The study found that: in the professional development of rural middle school teachers, the development status in three dimensions from high to low is: professional philosophy and ethics, professional ability and professional knowledge. Among them, the development of teachers' attitude and behavior in education and teaching, general knowledge, teaching implementation and teaching evaluation is not ideal. Finally, this study puts forward relevant suggestions to the state, training institutions and middle schools from the macro, meso and micro perspectives.*

Keywords: *Rural junior middle school teachers, teacher professional development, investigation and research, teacher training*

1. INTRODUCTION

The key to Chinese education is the take-off of rural education, and the key to rural education reform is the professional development of rural teachers. According to the China education development report, due to the absolute proportion of rural teachers in China's teaching staff, the level of their specialization has become the most important indicator to measure the overall professional development level of teachers in China. In June 2015, the State Council issued the rural teacher support plan (2015-2020), which clearly pointed out that "practical measures should be taken to strengthen the construction of rural teachers in remote and poor areas such as old, young, border and poor islands, significantly narrow the gap between urban and rural teachers, and enable every rural child to receive fair and quality education."

In 2012, the Ministry of Education issued the professional standard for middle school teachers (Trial) (hereinafter referred to as the professional standard), which comprehensively depicts the quality of middle school teachers. Professional standards are the basic professional requirements of national qualified middle school teachers, the basic norms for middle school teachers to implement education and teaching behavior, and the basic norms to guide the professional development of middle school teachers. Teacher training is an important means in the process of teachers' professional development. Through teaching training and active learning, teachers promote the development of their own professional emotion and attitude, professional knowledge and ability, and finally achieve the ultimate goal of promoting the all-round development of students. In this context, it is urgent to implement the policy plan for rural teachers, carry out rural teacher education and training, and promote the professional development of rural teachers.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Research on the Professional Development of Rural Teachers

(1) Statistical overview of relevant domestic literature

The author used CNKI to carry out advanced retrieval with the keyword of "rural teachers", and retrieved a total of 3366 journal papers and 954 doctoral theses; 156 journal papers and 373 doctoral theses were retrieved with the keyword of "junior middle school teachers' professional development"; Taking "rural junior middle school teachers' professional development" as the key word, 28 journal papers and 92 doctoral theses were retrieved;

Through the visual data analysis of the theme of "rural teachers", it can be seen that the number of papers related to "rural teachers" increased year by year from 1977 to 2022, and doubled in 2016, indicating that "rural teachers" have become the focus of educational research. Therefore, to sum up, rural teachers are the research focus in recent years.

In contrast, there is less research on the relevant literature of "junior middle school teachers' professional development", which was first published in 2006. It can be seen that Chinese scholars study the junior middle school teachers' professional development later, and there are few scholars. In contrast, there is less research on the relevant literature of "rural junior middle school teachers' professional development", which was first studied in 2004. It can be seen that the overall research on rural junior middle school teachers' professional development started late, which is an educational topic less involved by Chinese scholars at present, full of unknown possibilities.

(2) Research on the professional development

Chinese scholars' research on Rural Teachers' professional development mainly focuses on the current situation, existing problems, influencing factors and Strategies of rural teachers' professional development.

Firstly, it studies the current situation of rural teachers' professional development. Wu Liangkui (2015) at present, the contradiction between professional disadvantage and professional fairness, the contradiction between passive ownership of professional value and noble dedication, the contradiction between professional rights and professional responsibilities still exist, and the spear and shield between the weakness of professional self and the improvement of professional standards.

Secondly, it studies the problems existing in the professional development of rural teachers. Zhang Tingting and Wang Haiyan(2016) pointed out that at present, rural teachers have some problems, such as insufficient teachers, low average educational background of teachers, serious imbalance of teacher structure, housing difficulties, obvious job burnout and so on.

Thirdly, it studies the influencing factors of rural teachers' professional development. For example, Bai Liang and Guo Ermei (2018) pointed out that through the analysis of the influencing factors of teachers, they believed that the professional dignity of rural teachers was frustrated. It is accompanied by a sense of helplessness and insecurity in career for a long time; Being engaged in the teaching profession makes individuals unable to meet their own needs and have no sense of professional belonging. As a teacher, they can't realize their professional value and significance.

1.2. Limitations of Current Research

Looking at the above research results, it can be found that the analysis of factors affecting teachers' professional development have attracted the positive attention of researchers, but there are also the following shortcomings in the research:

First, in terms of research content, the research objects of most scholars on Teachers' professional development are excellent teachers, expert teachers and urban primary and secondary school teachers. There is only a small amount of research on the professional development of rural primary and secondary school teachers, so they lack a comprehensive understanding and grasp of the relevant information of rural teachers.

Second, in the research field, there are more studies on the professional development of college teachers, secondary vocational teachers, urban primary and secondary schools and other specific discipline teachers, while there are less studies on the overall professional development status of rural junior middle school teachers.

Third, although some achievements have been made in the research on the professional development of rural teachers in China, most of them are the investigation and Research on rural teachers in ethnic minority areas, and there is little investigation on a county in a province to put forward effective policies according to the specific situation of the county.

1.3. Research Purpose and Content

Rural education is the main content of the current educational development in China. The professional development and promotion of rural teachers is the main driving force of the development of rural education. We must give priority to the construction of rural teachers' professional development. In order to investigate the current situation of rural junior middle school teachers' professional development and training needs, and comprehensively consider the factors of economic and social development and the reality of educational development, this paper plans to select PS County in Sichuan Province as the survey area.

On the basis of consulting and reading a large number of relevant journals, academic papers and network resources, the author selects the professional standard for middle school teachers (Trial) (hereinafter referred to as the professional standard) issued by the Ministry of education in 2012 as the scale to measure the professional development of junior middle school teachers in PS county. Combined with the actual situation of education in this area, the author draws up a questionnaire to ensure the validity and reliability of the questionnaire, This online questionnaire was distributed to 136 junior middle school teachers in PS County, Sichuan Province, to understand and deeply explore the current situation of junior middle school teachers' professional development and training needs in PS County, analyze the problems existing in Teachers' professional development, put forward feasible strategies according to the actual situation, and provide factual support and data guarantee for the training scheme of junior middle school teachers in PS County in the future, so as to improve the quality of teacher training.

2.4. Innovation Point

(1) This study adopts the questionnaire survey method, formulates the measurement table based on the professional standards for middle school teachers (Trial) issued by the Ministry of education in 2012, and compiles the questionnaire in combination with the local educational development. The questionnaire is targeted.

(2) The object of this study is rural junior middle school teachers, which is helpful to understand the overall relevant information of rural junior middle school teachers.

(3) This study takes teachers' professional development as the foothold, and discusses the current situation of teachers' training needs.

3. RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1. Research Questions

According to the purpose and focus of the research, combined with the professional standard for middle school teachers (Trial) (hereinafter referred to as the professional standard) issued by the Ministry of education in 2012 and the educational development of the region, the basic problems of this research are determined as follows:

- (1) What is the current situation of teachers' professional development and training needs?
- (2) Based on the current research, what are the problems in Teachers' professional development and training?
- (3) What effective measures should be taken to solve the problems and reasons of teachers' professional development and needs?

3.2. Research Tool

Table1. *Teachers' professional development (scale)*

Dimensions (3)	Areas (14)	Number of items
Professional philosophy and ethics	(1) Professional understanding	5
	(2) Attitude and behavior towards students	4
	(3) Attitude and behavior in education and teaching	5
	(4) Personal cultivation and behavior	5
professional knowledge	(5) Educational knowledge	6
	(6) Subject knowledge	4
	(7) Subject teaching knowledge	4
	(8) General knowledge	4
Professional ability	(9) Instructional design	3
	(10) Teaching implementation	6
	(11) Class management and educational activities	7
	(12) Education and teaching evaluation	3
	(13) Communication and cooperation	4
	(14) Reflection and development	3

The questionnaire consists of two parts: the preface and the main body of the questionnaire. The content of the questionnaire includes the basic information of the respondents, the overall situation of teachers' professional development and teachers' training needs. Among them, 8 questions are set for personal basic information. When investigating the overall situation of teachers' professional development, we compiled the evaluation scale of teachers' professional development based on the professional standards formulated by the Ministry of education. The scale is divided into three dimensions, 14 fields and 63 items (as shown in Table 1), and adopts the five grade model of Likert scale. The score of 1 ~ 5 indicates "completely inconsistent" respectively, "Relatively non compliant", "moderately compliant", "relatively compliant" and "fully compliant". In terms of teacher training needs, the author sets up 10 questions, mainly focusing on five aspects: training effect, training content, training methods and teachers, training time and training assessment. Finally, the average value of the data is counted and analyzed by using Excel software and spss25 software.

3.2. Research Object

Table2. Analysis of the basic situation of the research object

Variable	Option	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	57	41.9%
	Female	79	58.1%
Age	20-29 year group	65	47.8%
	31-40 year group	30	22.1%
	41 years and over	41	30.1%
Title	Not rated	29	21.3%
	third class teacher	1	0.7%
	Second class teacher	53	39%
	First class teacher	34	25%
	senior teacher	19	14%
Highest education	junior college	17	12.5%
	undergraduate	119	87.5%

In this survey, teachers' disciplines cover all disciplines of junior middle schools, and teachers' schools cover 9 junior middle schools in PS county. There were 79 female teachers, accounting for 58.1%, and 57 male teachers, accounting for 41.9%. Most of them were young and middle-aged teachers, accounting for 47.8% aged 20-29, 22.1% aged 31-40 and 30.1% aged 40 and over. The education background of teachers is mainly undergraduate, accounting for 87.5% of the total number, and those with college education account for 12.5%, of which 64% have obtained junior and intermediate professional titles, and 21.3% of teachers have no professional titles, and only 14% have senior professional titles. The specific data are shown in Table 2.

3.3. Research Process

Table3. Reliability and validity analysis of the questionnaire

Reliability Statistics		KMO and Bartlett's		
Cronbach's Alpha	Items	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		0.943
	0.998	63	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square 24211.043

For the evaluation scale questions, we first analyzed the reliability and validity of the questionnaire, in which the Cronbach reliability coefficient is 0.998, the kmo sampling appropriateness scale is 0.943, and the reliability and validity are greater than 0.8 (as shown in Table 3). It can be seen that the questionnaire has high reliability and can be used for further investigation and research. Based on the above analysis, the survey took the form of questionnaire stars. A total of 136 junior middle school teachers participated in the online questionnaire survey, of which 136 were valid, with an effective rate of 100%. The data in the valid questionnaire are complete without missing value. The survey data are analyzed by SPSS25 software.

4. RESEARCH RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

4.1. Overall Situation of Teachers' Professional Development

4.1.1. Analysis on the Current Situation of Teachers' Professional Ideas and Ethics

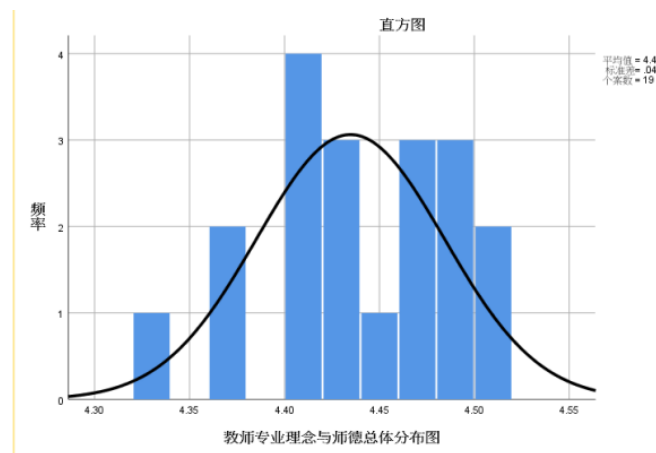


Figure 1. Frequency distribution histogram of teachers' professional ideas and ethics

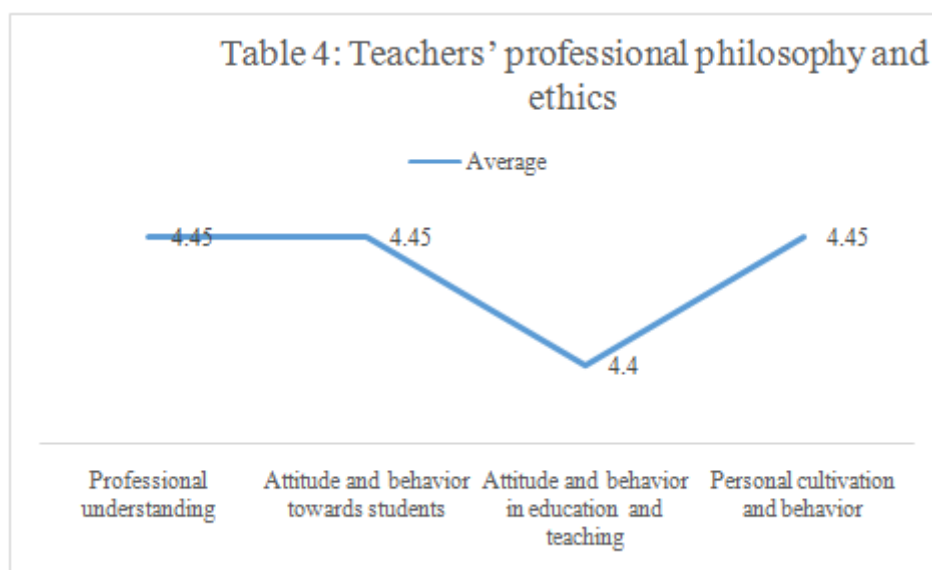


Figure 1 is the histogram of the frequency distribution of teachers' professional ideas and Ethics (the abscissa is the average value under the dimension of teachers' professional ideas and ethics, and the ordinate is the frequency). Through the analysis of the data, it can be found that the data distribution in Figure 1 is relatively uniform. Therefore, it can be seen that the dimension of teachers' professional ideas and ethics is close to the normal distribution.

In Table 4, we can more intuitively see the development level and overall trend of teachers' professional philosophy and ethics in the four fields. From the survey data, the average of teachers' professional philosophy and ethics in the four fields is between 4.40 and 4.45. It shows that the overall development of the surveyed teachers in the dimension of professional philosophy and ethics is in line with the basic requirements of professional standards. Among them, the average value of teachers in the fields of professional understanding and understanding, attitude and behavior towards students and personal cultivation and behavior is the highest, which is 4.45 points, indicating that teachers can better understand and understand the significance of middle school education, care for, love and respect every middle school student, have good personal cultivation and become an example for students. However, the average value of teachers' attitude and behavior in the field of education and teaching is the lowest, which is 4.40 points, indicating that the development of teachers' attitude and behavior in education and teaching is not ideal.

4.1.2. Analysis on the Current Situation of Teachers' Professional Knowledge

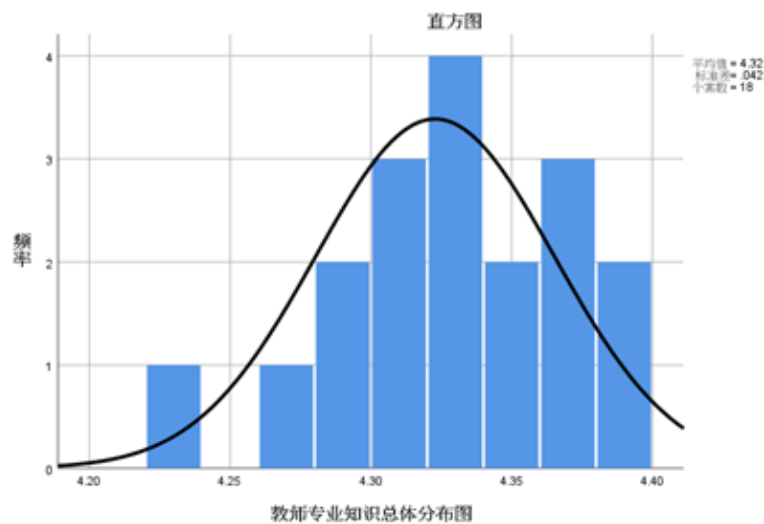


Figure 2. Frequency distribution histogram of teachers' professional knowledge

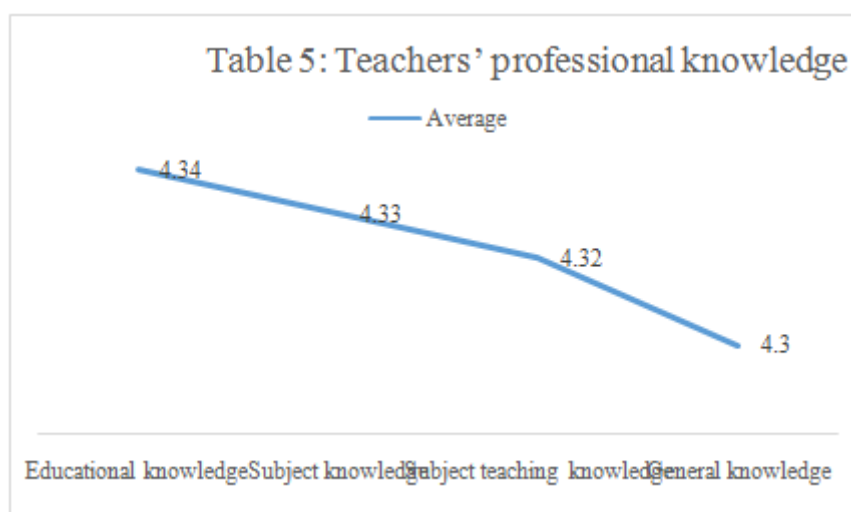


Figure 2 is the histogram of the frequency distribution of teachers' professional knowledge (the abscissa is the average value under the dimension of teachers' professional knowledge, and the ordinate is the frequency). Through the analysis of the data, it can be found that the data distribution in Figure 2 is relatively uniform, which shows that the dimension of teachers' professional knowledge is close to the normal distribution.

In Table 5, we can more intuitively see the development level and overall trend of teachers' professional knowledge in the four fields. From the survey data, the average of teachers' professional knowledge in the four fields is between 4.30 and 4.34. It shows that the overall development of the surveyed teachers in the dimension of professional knowledge is more in line with the basic requirements of the professional standards. Among them, the average value of teachers in the field of educational knowledge is the highest, which is 4.34 points, indicating that teachers have better mastered the basic principles and methods of middle school education and the characteristics and laws of middle school students' psychological development.

However, the average score of teachers in the field of general knowledge is the lowest, which is 4.30, indicating that teachers do not have a good understanding of other expanding knowledge such as natural science, humanities and social sciences. It can be seen that the development of teachers' professional knowledge in various fields from high to low is: educational knowledge, subject knowledge, subject teaching knowledge and general knowledge.

4.1.3. Analysis on the Current Situation of Teachers' Professional Ability

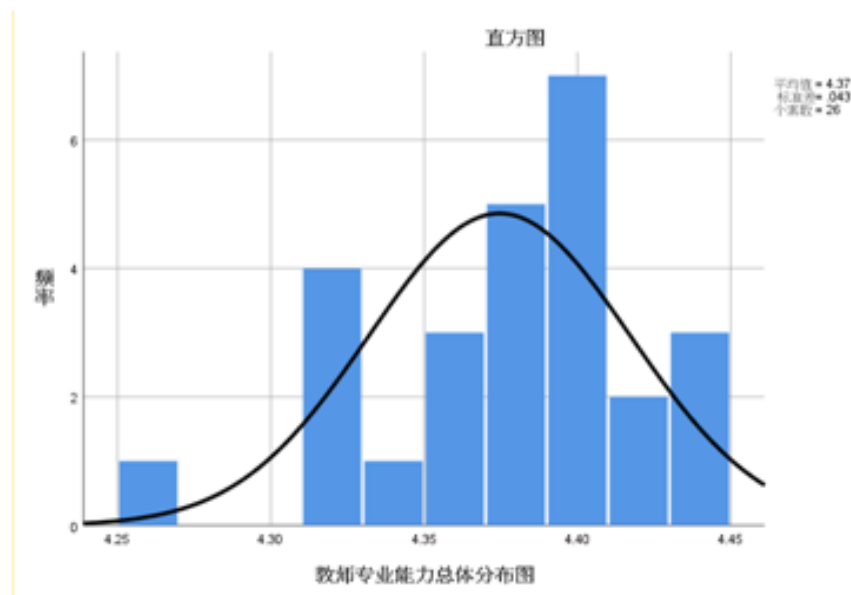


Figure 3. Frequency distribution histogram of teachers' professional ability

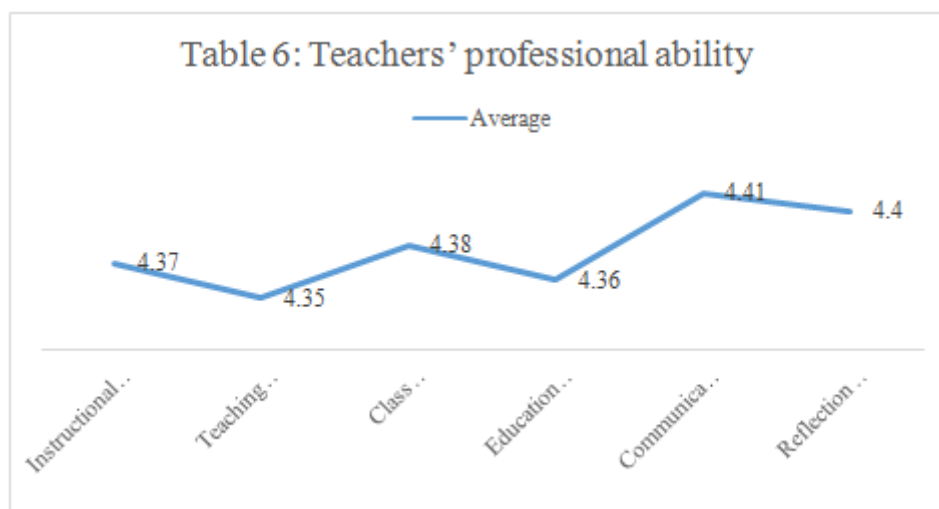


Figure 3 is the histogram of the frequency distribution of teachers' professional ability (the abscissa is the average value under the dimension of teachers' professional ability, and the ordinate is the frequency). Through the analysis of the data, it can be found that the data distribution in Figure 3 is relatively uniform, so it can be seen that the dimension of teachers' professional ability is close to the normal distribution.

In Table 6, we can more intuitively see the development level and overall trend of teachers' professional ability in six fields. From the survey data, the average value of teachers' professional ability in six fields is between 4.35 and 4.41. It shows that the overall development of the surveyed teachers in the dimension of professional ability is more in line with the basic requirements of the professional standards. Among them, the average value of teachers in the field of communication and cooperation is the highest, which is 4.41 points, indicating that teachers can better deal with the relationship between themselves and middle school students, parents and colleagues in daily teaching and establish good interpersonal relationships. However, the average value of teachers in the two fields of teaching implementation and teaching evaluation is low, 4.35 and 4.36, indicating that teachers can not better regulate the teaching process and implement diversified teaching evaluation.

4.2. Teacher Training Needs

4.2.1. Training Effect Demand

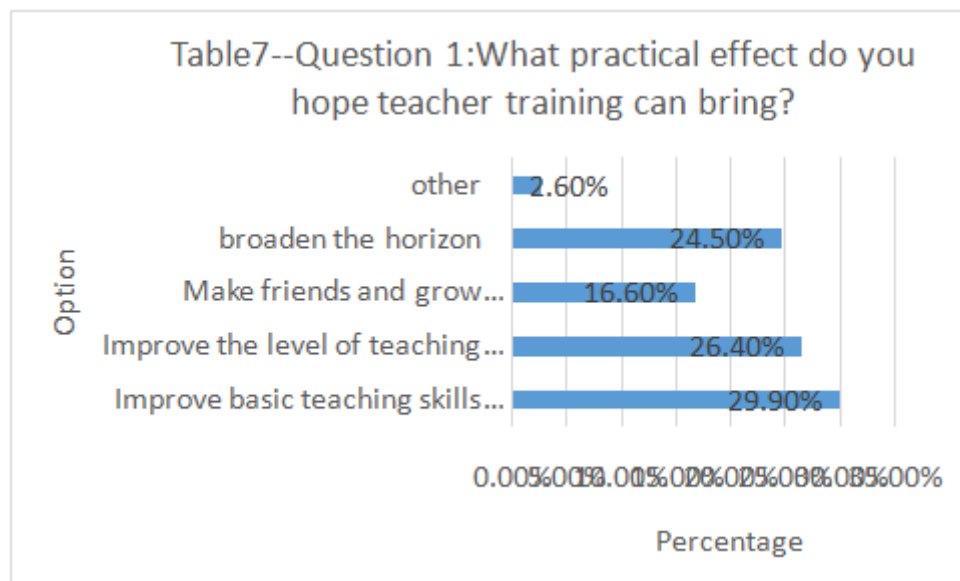


Table 7 shows the cluster bar chart of "the actual effect you want the teacher training to bring" (the abscissa is the percentage of people selected and the ordinate is the option). From the data in table 10, we can see that the actual effects of teacher training are to improve basic teaching skills and teaching skills, improve the level of teaching and research, scientific research and broaden horizons, accounting for 29.90%, 26.40% and 24.50% of the total number, respectively, of which the demand for making friends and common growth accounts for only 16.60%.

4.2.2. Training Content Demand

Table 8 Question 2: What kind of training do you want to carry out at present	
option	percentage
Professional concept and cultivation of teachers' Ethics	27.90%
Subject expertise	31.50%
Discipline and professional ability	36.40%
other	4.20%
Question 3: In terms of professional philosophy and ethics, do you expect to understand it through training	
option	percentage
Successful teacher cases	16.40%
Hot spots and norms of teachers' Ethics	9.90%
Teachers' Job Burnout and psychological adjustment	15.90%
Home school cooperation and teacher-student relationship	16.00%
Relevant knowledge of teachers' professional standards	14.70%
Current situation and development trend of curriculum reform	15.30%
Frontier theory of subject teaching at home and abroad	10.60%
other	1.20%
Question 4: In terms of discipline expertise, what do you expect to gain through training	

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option	percentage
Middle school students' development knowledge (primary school students' family and growth, learning methods, learning psychology)	33.90%
Middle school education and teaching knowledge (Principles of primary education, teaching design knowledge, teaching evaluation knowledge)	34.50%
Health care related knowledge of middle school students	29.10%
other	2.40%
Question 5: In terms of discipline and professional ability, what do you expect to gain through training	
option	percentage
Teaching implementation ability (curriculum standard implementation, organizing teaching activities, teaching design, etc.)	19.10%
Teaching evaluation ability (evaluation design, evaluation content and method, etc.)	16.60%
Teaching research ability (school-based research, classroom research, small project research, etc.)	17.90%
Modern educational technology ability (courseware, digital media, network resources)	16.60%
Development and utilization ability of curriculum resources (resource development and integration, establishment of resource database)	16.20%
Teacher training ability (school-based training related knowledge and methods, in school learning community)	12.40%
other	1.10%

(1) Professional philosophy and teachers' Ethics

From the perspective of professional philosophy and teachers' ethics (Table 8), middle school teachers are eager to understand successful teacher cases (16.40%), hoping to accumulate experience, reflect on themselves, consciously adjust teaching and learning behavior in practice and improve the efficiency of classroom teaching through the learning of successful teaching cases; Pay attention to the training of home school cooperation and teacher-student relationship (16.00%), hoping to deal with the relationship with students and parents in daily teaching, and act as the link of home school cooperation to jointly promote the all-round development of students; pay more attention to the current situation and development trend of curriculum reform (15.30%) and the knowledge related to teachers' professional standards (14.70%), and hope to cultivate socialist builders and successors who can meet the requirements of the times through the development of their own professional ability. At the same time, facing the dual pressure of teaching and scientific research, we also need to alleviate teachers' Job Burnout and help teachers' psychological debugging training (accounting for 15.90%).

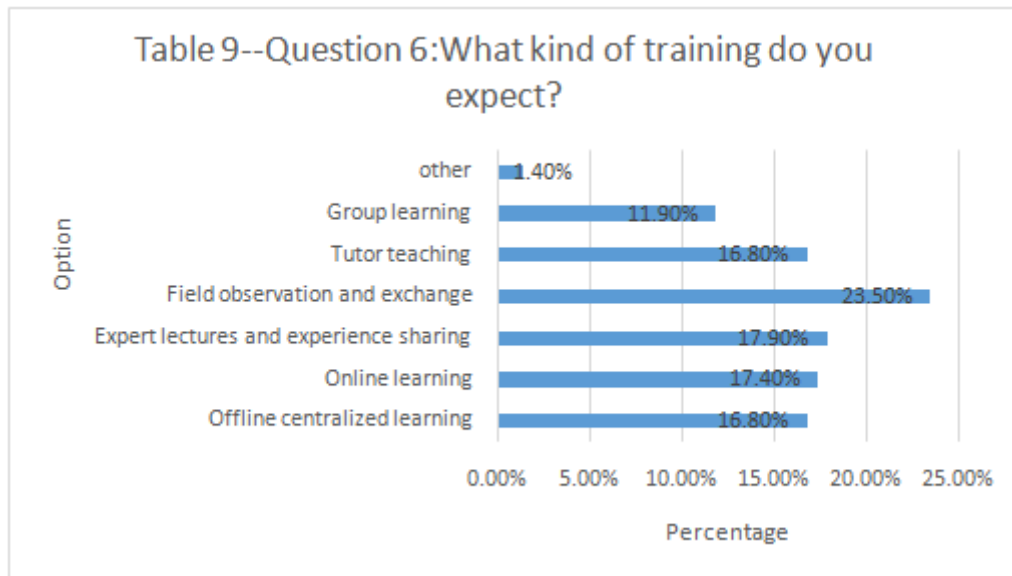
(2) Demand for Discipline expertise

From the perspective of discipline and professional knowledge (Table 8), the demand for teachers of middle school education and teaching knowledge (Principles of middle school education, teaching design knowledge and teaching evaluation knowledge) and middle school students' development knowledge (middle school students' family and growth, learning methods and Learning Psychology) is relatively high, accounting for 68.40% of the total number, while the demand for understanding middle school students' health care related knowledge only accounts for 29.10%.

(3) Demand for Discipline and professional ability

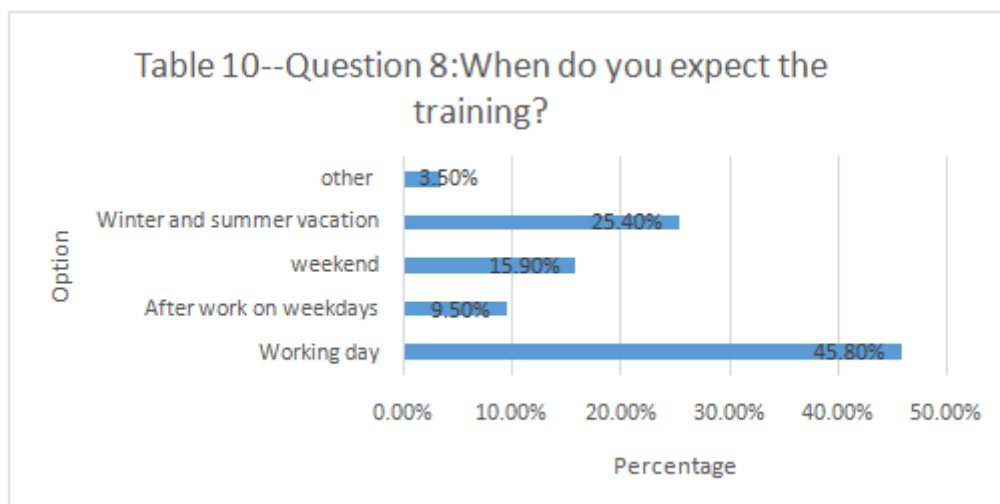
From the perspective of discipline and professional ability (Table 8), middle school teachers have the highest demand for teaching implementation ability, accounting for 19.10%, followed by teaching research ability, teaching evaluation ability, modern educational technology ability and curriculum resource development and utilization ability, accounting for 17.90%, 16.60%, 16.60% and 16.20% respectively. For other training needs, it only accounts for 1.10%. It shows that middle school teachers pay more attention to the abilities of teaching implementation, research, evaluation, educational technology and the development and utilization of curriculum resources.

4.2.3. Training Methods and Teacher Demand



As shown in table 9, it is not difficult to find that the favorite training method for middle school teachers is on-site observation and exchange (accounting for 23.50%), and secondly, teachers are more willing to focus on offline Research (accounting for 16.80%) and tutor teaching (accounting for 16.80%) for self-knowledge construction, which is not only related to the practicality of teachers' profession, but also related to the academic characteristics of teachers. Efficient lectures by famous teachers inside and outside the school to understand the teaching and academic frontier in a fast way. It is also found from the survey that the support rate of teachers is only 14.70% and 11.90% whether it is online training or group learning. Therefore, these two training modes can be used as a supplement to teacher training.

4.2.4. Training Time Demand Analysis



The data results show that 45.80% of teachers choose to participate in training from Monday to Friday, 25.40% of teachers choose to participate in relevant training in winter and summer vacation, 15.90% of teachers hope to train on weekends, and only 9.50% choose to participate in training after work on weekdays. It can be seen that due to the heavy and tense work tasks undertaken by teachers, most teachers are reluctant to take out winter, summer and weekend time to participate in training.

5. RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Considering that the Respondents involved in the questionnaire are limited to the middle school teachers in PS County, we are very cautious in making conclusions. The conclusions on some issues may not be broadly representative, but we have reason to believe that our investigation still has certain guiding significance.

Through the investigation of the professional development status and training needs of teachers in 9 middle schools in PS County, the following conclusions can be drawn.

First of all, in the professional development of middle school teachers, we can know that the development status of teachers in three dimensions from high to low is: professional philosophy and ethics, professional ability and professional knowledge. Among them, in terms of teachers' professional ideas and ethics, the development of teachers' education and teaching attitude and behavior is not ideal, and they can not teach students according to their aptitude and guide students according to the situation.

In terms of professional ability, the development of teachers in teaching implementation is not ideal. They can not "skillfully" use diversified teaching methods, and can not make good use of the educational functions of the Communist Youth League and young pioneers, such as organizing life, collective activities, information dissemination and so on.

In terms of professional knowledge, teachers' mastery of general knowledge is not comprehensive enough. According to the basic concept of "teacher ethics first, student-centered, ability oriented and lifelong learning" put forward in the professional standards, the learning of general knowledge and the improvement of humanistic quality are particularly important for middle school teachers. Although the development of teachers in some individual fields is not very good, the overall situation of teachers' professional development is relatively optimistic. The only prominent problem is the large gap in Teachers' professional development.

Secondly, in terms of teacher training needs, teachers pay more attention to the training of their own teaching skills and basic skills, and have more needs in discipline professional knowledge and professional ability. Teachers have strong personality characteristics, and hope that the form of teaching and training reflects the characteristics of "equal communication" and "participation and sharing". At the same time, teachers pursue happiness and hope that teaching and training will not occupy winter, summer and weekends. These characteristics of middle school teachers should become the basic requirements of training design.

Finally, the professional development of middle school teachers has its own growth law and phased characteristics, and is affected by external factors. Teacher training can promote teachers' professional development. However, in the specific development stage, because teachers are affected by personal (internal) factors or external factors, they are easy to stagnate in a certain development stage and cannot develop to a higher stage. At this time, with the help of professional organizations, we can solve the confusion in development through training and promote teachers' development to a higher stage. Therefore, we can put forward the following suggestions to the state, training institutions and middle schools from the macro, meso and micro perspectives:

(1)The state has set up special investigation institutions to establish and improve the collection mechanism of information on the training needs of middle school teachers.

It is necessary for the state to set up special investigation institutions according to the current situation, design investigation tools for different groups of teachers and different development stages, constantly collect various actual demand information related to teacher training such as training contents and training methods, and establish and improve the collection mechanism of training demand information of middle school teachers, which will help to continuously improve the effect of teacher training and promote teachers' professional development.

(2) Training institutions shall reasonably arrange training contents and actively carry out hierarchical training.

Hierarchical training is to divide the participating teachers into different levels according to certain standards for a training objective. Each level corresponds to different levels of training content. The training content should closely follow the training objectives and the needs of the participating teachers,

and reflect the internal logical connection at the same time. The grading standard shall be formulated according to the training objectives, including age, educational background, professional title, professional background, teaching level, training experience, teaching school, etc. Through accurate grading and layering, reduce the training scale of each level, clarify the training objectives of each level, one topic at a time, and promote the training work step by step.

(3) Middle school teachers should actively cooperate and realistically reflect their needs for training

Questionnaire survey and interview are the most commonly used methods to obtain the training content demand information of middle school teachers. The majority of middle school teachers should actively cooperate with researchers and realistically reflect their demand information for teacher training, so as to receive the training they need most, and continuously improve and develop through receiving training.

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