

Original Paper

Challenges Encountered by Teachers in the Implementation of Quality Assurance Measures

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Abstract

The study investigated the challenges encountered by teachers in the implementation of quality assurance measures. The research designed for the study was a survey method. The sample for this study was fifty-two people who are faculty members of the School of General Studies in Xianning Vocational and Technical College. A semi-structured interview and a structured questionnaire were used for data collection in the study. The reliability of the instrument was determined by testing and retesting. The data were analyzed using frequency counting and simple percentage. The result of the study showed: inadequate understanding of learning conditions, insufficient participation in the formulation of quality assurance policies, inadequate educational quality assurance training, imperfect teacher performance appraisal system, inadequate funding support for online teaching activities (during the pandemic) and a shortage of having the qualification certificate of the related profession are the challenges encountered by teachers in the implementation of quality assurance measures in Xianning Vocational and Technical College.

Keywords

challenges, teachers, implementation, quality assurance

1. Introduction

Under the background of the popularization of higher education, the high quality development of higher vocational colleges needs to improve the teaching quality and cultivate compound talents with innovative spirit and practical ability as the service purpose. According to Zou Zhiyan et al. (2020). Managers of organizations improve the quality of education through quality assurance measures using a variety of strategies and tools. And good education quality is closely related to teachers who provide education. Teachers know and understand students' learning needs, identify and lead students' learning

process, and manage the learning environment, which plays an important role in quality management. On the one hand, as the subject of quality responsibility, teachers are challenged to provide high-quality teaching. On the other hand, for higher vocational colleges, the “instrumentality” of quality management weakens teachers’ right to speak and discourages their enthusiasm and creativity to actively participate in quality construction in the process of top-down promotion. Therefore, there should be a shift in the mindset of the organization’s managers-the passive obedience of teachers (accepting teaching assignments and quality assurance oversight) to the active creation of a culture that supports high quality teaching (from documentation to culture). Jiang Heng et al. (2011) proposed that without the guidance and support of culture, quality management would only make teachers and students more passive under the guidance of administrative system, thus losing their so-called “authority” and leaving only “obedience”. For a long time, quality assurance could not be “guaranteed”. At the same time, many teachers believe that there are still some challenges and problems in the implementation of quality assurance measures in their teaching. While these challenges may be universal, the case of the higher vocational school teachers is the focus of this paper.

1.1 Background of the Study

1.1.1 Quality Assurance

Quality Assurance can be understood as the trust conditions provided in order to achieve the quality requirements in the process of quality management. It can also be understood as a series of guarantee activities designed by people in order to achieve a certain goal. In the ISO9000 quality management standard, there is a set of accreditation and certification bodies which monitor the key processes of the the subscribing organization, to check that they are operating as they are supposed to. Therefore, quality assurance can be seen as the process of providing a series of strong evidence as a guarantee of quality, the main purpose is to make users satisfied, and then gain the trust of users. Therefore, from the formulation of objectives and standards to the monitoring of the operation process need to be formulated systematically and scientifically. If the understanding of quality assurance in the field of commodities is applied to the field of education, it can be considered that the quality assurance in the field of education is a process in which educational institutions guide, control and supervise the process of talent training by scientifically formulating the school positioning goal and analyzing the school’s own development conditions in order to satisfy students and the society. Among them, the supporting evidence is the construction of teaching staff, hardware infrastructure, major and curriculum Settings, information platform construction and other aspects. On the other hand, Jiang and Jing (2006) believed that the quality assurance of higher education should meet the following three aspects: First, it should be socially responsible. Being socially responsible not only contributes to the development of society, but also enhances the image of the school. The second is customer satisfaction. The customers of higher education are students and employers. This is mainly reflected in students obtaining the best education, certificates with specific levels of knowledge and vocational abilities. The third is to be responsible for the subject. Teachers are expected to maintain the integrity of the subject and develop students’ positive

attitudes towards the subject and its application to society. Chen (2020) points out that the ultimate purpose of education quality assurance is to ensure personnel training, school-running quality, school education level and quality, and promote the stable and sustainable development of education.

1.1.2 Implementation of Internal quality Assurance System in Higher Vocational Colleges

Quality assurance system is divided into external quality assurance system and internal quality assurance system. Generally speaking, external quality assurance system refers to officially established organizations, such as expert organizations established by educational administrative departments, whose members include experts in the industry and experts outside the industry. Such an official organization mainly plays a leading, supervising and coordinating role in school quality management. The internal quality assurance system is the behavioral motivation and system guarantee that the school produces actively in order to ensure the teaching quality.

Taking Xianning Vocational and Technical College as an example, this paper expounds the internal quality assurance system of higher vocational colleges. The purpose of higher vocational education is to cultivate various types of technical skills and comprehensive quality talents with a certain theoretical level. Gao et al. (2021) submitted that the three key aspects of talent training quality are competency standard, talent training program and curriculum standard. Competency standards are formulated by the state with the participation of industrial enterprises. They are regularly revised and released through unified organization at the national level to guide the formulation of personnel training programs and curriculum standards in various colleges and universities, and serve as the main basis for supervision and evaluation of the quality of personnel training of various types.

The organization and implementation of quality assurance is to refine and implement the knowledge points, technical skills points and quality points of personnel training into each teaching process through teaching design and activity arrangement, so as to realize the cultivation of talents for the country and the party. The supervision of quality assurance needs to build a sound supervision and evaluation mechanism of quality assurance. The management standard system at the management level refers to the management norms and procedures that teaching managers use teaching implementation standards to implement teaching quality evaluation and timely guide teaching process to carry out correctly and perfectly in order to achieve teaching objectives. In this sense, the management standard system includes the organizational system of evaluation for each teaching link, evaluation, feedback, improvement procedures and management evaluation data and other standards. Shi (2016) believes that the carrier of teaching quality is students, and scrapping procedures for unqualified products cannot be implemented. Therefore, the management mechanism of evaluation, feedback and improvement should be a continuous spiraling process.

1.2 The Methods Adopted by Xianning Vocational and Technical College Are as Follows:

(1) To revise the talent training program and formulate the curriculum standards, enterprises should be investigated and opinions of experts and experts should be consulted by questionnaires; hold the professional construction steering committee meeting.

(2) Establish a technical skill training quality assurance mode connecting with “1+X” certificate, where “1” represents academic certificate and “X” represents several vocational skill level certificates.

(3) Further improve the teaching inspection system and establish a quality evaluation mechanism. Improve the quality assurance system by means of “effective classroom certification”. The internal quality assurance system of higher vocational education emphasizes the whole process of all-round education, diagnosis and improvement emphasize the problem orientation, self-correction, self-diagnosis and reform, its purpose is to improve the internal quality assurance system and promote the quality development of higher vocational education.

The starting point and objective of the above discussion are from the management and functional departments, and there is still a research gap on the problems faced by the discipline teachers with quality responsibility in the implementing quality assurance measures. Therefore, this paper will analyze the challenges faced by higher vocational teachers.

1.3 Literature Review

1.3.1 Challenges Encountered by Teachers

Chen (2020) studied the construction of Sichuan higher vocational education quality assurance system from the perspective of diagnosis and reform, analyzed the problems faced by the effective operation of Sichuan higher vocational education quality assurance system, proposed that through the decomposition and transmission of goals, the school development understanding of “goal-oriented, everyone is responsible” should be sorted out, and teachers and students should change their concept from “ask me to do it” to “I want to do it”. The design and operation of diagnosis and reform at all levels need to be supplemented by corresponding incentive and assessment mechanism, so as to stimulate the internal motivation of faculty and staff, continuously strengthen the motivation of independent improvement, and gradually form the consciousness of quality culture.

Under the background of information age, how to create a good ecological environment for teacher management and highlight the “advanced” and “professional” characteristics of higher vocational education has gradually become the focus of people’s attention. Lin Liudong et al. (2019) proposed the establishment of a self-development platform for teachers, which can guide teachers to correctly position their self-development needs at different stages according to their career planning, discover the “nearest development zone”, generate endogenous motivation, transform their self-growth needs into learning, training and performance improvement needs, and finally achieve professional growth. It also suggested deepening the reform of the income distribution system and optimizing the incentive channel for high-end talents. It is necessary to carry out the secondary management of the school and the school, perfect the performance appraisal and distribution system of the school and the school’s secondary management, highlight the performance orientation, reflect the intellectual value of talents, implement the income distribution system of excellent reward for good performance and excellent reward for good labor oriented by increasing the value of knowledge, and give full play to the incentive and guiding role of performance distribution in the teachers. The income distribution should be tilted towards the

teaching front line, high-level talents and key positions, and excellent talents should be encouraged to stand out.

Xiong (2019) pointed out Teachers should have the spirit of “teaching is not afraid of difficulties, management is not afraid of difficulties; There are dangers in the work, and hard work can pass the exam”. No pains, no gains, teachers should work hard and study hard, continue to comprehensively improve the ideological and moral, scientific and cultural quality and professional knowledge and skills level. Teachers should learn to absorb the advantages of others’ teaching, learn from each other and improve themselves. The smooth development of teaching work and the perfect realization of expected goals need corresponding internal and external conditions. Teachers’ own understanding, attitude and input to teaching work are fundamental and internal causes, while external working conditions, environment and rewards are conditions and external causes.

After analyzing relevant literature on performance management and teacher performance, Xiong (2018) believes that teacher performance management refers to the activities of school administrators to manage various factors and links affecting teachers’ improvement of education and teaching quality in order to implement educational policies and regulations and realize school development strategies. The implementation of teacher performance management is conducive to improving school performance, improving the management level of school administrators, and promoting the rapid development of teacher profession.

Bi et al. (2022) believe that in the teaching environment of online teaching, students’ learning status and mastery of knowledge cannot be intuitively and timely understood, and students’ learning process lacks of binding force. Obviously, online teaching puts forward higher requirements for students’ autonomous learning ability. It is suggested that colleges and universities can apply big data, cloud computing and other technologies into online teaching to achieve a closed loop of the whole process of teaching before, during and after class. Before class, big data analysis technology should be used to grasp students’ internal learning needs and interests, and timely adjust teaching programs. In the class, situational classroom is created according to the teaching objectives, teaching content is embedded, and students’ learning trajectory and learning activity are observed through the teaching platform, and precise and personalized guidance is provided for different students’ learning conditions. After class, students submit their homework through the platform, and teachers give feedback to them in time after reviewing, thus improving the efficiency of after-class tutoring. In order to realize the deep integration of Internet and education and teaching, it is necessary for teachers to enhance their online teaching ability, get rid of the inertia of traditional teaching, constantly update their teaching concepts and teaching methods, and transform the teaching mode from “mono channel” to “dual channel”. Colleges and universities should actively carry out the research and exchange of teaching methods, learning rules and management mechanism of online education. Organize and carry out special training of online teaching based on information technology. Provide professional guidance for teachers in online

teaching, solve the “pain points” in online teaching, make the classroom active and alive, and comprehensively improve teachers’ online teaching ability.

Luo (2020) believes that teachers need to enter enterprises and consciously cultivate “double professional” qualities. Enterprises are an important evaluator of the quality of talent training, and one of the ways to test the quality of talent training in vocational colleges is whether students are competent for their positions in enterprises. Therefore, school-enterprise cooperation is the inevitable way to develop vocational education, which is exactly the most fragile place of vocational education at present. Teachers should take the initiative to practice at the front line of enterprises, in the form of temporary positions, as consultants, mentoring pairs, zero distance to understand the development trend of enterprises and industries, use cross-border resource advantages and professional execution, to provide professional services and effective strategies for enterprise customers. The integration of theoretical teaching and practical teaching, so as to cultivate practical and innovative workers needed by enterprises and industries.

1.3.2 Difficulties Faced by Teachers in Implementing Quality Assurance

Sang Guoyuan et al. (2017) pointed out that while pursuing high-quality development, Australian teacher education also faces difficulties at different levels, especially the management of teacher education and the strategies and methods of teacher evaluation. The quality of teacher education depends on the quality of teacher educators. However, in the practice of teacher education, the basic quality of teacher educators cannot meet the current requirements of high quality teacher training. Relevant institutions and organizations should create conditions conducive to professional learning for teacher educators and the concept of teacher educators as learners should be implemented in the curriculum of pre-service training for teachers. At the same time, teacher educators should learn to understand how to go beyond their own teaching practice and teaching knowledge, and gradually develop into a research-oriented teacher educator.

According to Zhou and Fan (2020), the quality assurance system in the Netherlands is jointly formulated by members of the professional community, integrates objectives, evaluation, theoretical resources and support platforms, takes into account the commonalities and characteristics of all kinds of teachers and educators, ensures professional quality externally, encourages sustainable development internally, continuously revises, and is based on empirical evidence.

Eyiuche Ifeoma Olibie, Wenceslaus Ndubueze Ofojebe and Theodora Chinelo Ezugoh (2015) took Anambra, Nigeria, as the research object, and examined the basis, mechanism and challenges of quality assurance in teachers’ professional practice. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The sample size involved 524 teachers from primary schools in the state. A questionnaire containing 30 items was used to collect data with the improved 4-point Likert scale. Factor analysis was used for data analysis. Mean score, standard deviation and Pearson correlation. The study found that there is a highly positive correlation between the reasons, mechanisms, challenges and quality assurance of effective teacher professional practice in Anambra. The results show that teachers, the government and the private sector

should establish adequate funding/financing mechanisms for basic education to ensure the quality of teachers' professional practice, effectively provide courses, develop infrastructure, constantly monitor/supervise resources, and continuously develop personnel using innovative methods and tools. The above mentioned studies include how the management and functional departments improve teachers' quality awareness, how to motivate teachers, performance management system and online teaching safeguards. It also talked about the importance of teachers' professional quality and the ways to improve their professional quality. Through reference and integration, the research on the problems faced by teachers in implementing quality assurance measures was carried out in Xianning Vocational and Technical College.

The purpose of this study is to examine and understand the specific challenges faced by teachers when implementing quality assurance measures at Xianning Vocational and Technical College. (XNVTC for short in the following text).

The other objectives are to:

- (1) To find out if inadequate understanding of learning condition is a problem for teachers to implement quality assurance measures in XNVTC.
- (2) To find out if insufficient participation in the formulation of quality assurance policies is a problem for teachers to implement quality assurance measures in XNVTC.
- (3) To find out if inadequate educational quality assurance training is responsible for the problem for teachers to implement quality assurance measures in XNVTC.
- (4) To find out if imperfect teacher performance appraisal system is a problem for teachers to implement quality assurance measures in XNVTC.
- (5) To find out if inadequate funding support for online teaching activities (during the pandemic) is a problem for teachers to implement quality assurance measures in XNVTC.
- (6) To find out if the shortage of having the qualification certificate of the related profession is a problem for teachers to implement quality assurance measures in XNVTC.

The following research question were generated to guide this study:

- (1) Is inadequate understanding of learning condition a problem for teachers to implement quality assurance measures in XNVTC?
- (2) Is insufficient participation in the formulation of quality assurance policies a problem for teachers to implement quality assurance measures in XNVTC?
- (3) Is inadequate educational quality assurance training is responsible for the problem for teachers to implement quality assurance measures in XNVTC?
- (4) Is the imperfect teacher performance appraisal system a problem for teachers to implement quality assurance measures in XNVTC?
- (5) Is inadequate funding support for online teaching activities (during the pandemic) a problem for teachers to implement quality assurance measures in XNVTC?

(6) Is a shortage of having the qualification certificate of the related profession is a problem for teachers to implement quality assurance measures in XNVTC?

2. Method

The research design of this study is a survey method. The study was carried out in the School of General Studies of Xianning Vocational and Technical College, and the sample consisted of full-time teachers in four majors: Chinese, Mathematics, English and Mental Health. The sample size for this study was fifty-two people, using convenience sampling. Semi-structured interviews and questionnaires were used as the main tools for data collection. This is divided into two parts; A and B. Part A contained personal data of the respondents and part B consisted of the research questions and was divided into six subsections to obtain information on the various research questions posed by this investigation. A four-point rating scale was adopted and is shown as follows: Strongly Agree (SA) = (4points) ,Agree (A) = (3 points), Disagree (D) = (2 points) and Strongly Disagree (AD) = (1 point).

The interviews were conducted by randomly selecting five teachers who had participated in Effective Classroom Certification in the past year. The data were coded by collating the answers to the problems they faced. Despite quality assurance measures were implemented in accordance with documents or policies, vocational teachers face many challenges, some of which are described below.

Table 2.1 Problems Encountered by Vocational Teacher in the Implementation of Quality Measures

Informant	Significant Statements
Informant 1	<i>"The learning condition is complicated and there is no time to in-depth study of the students' situation. As a result, teaching design is not arranged according to students' knowledge."</i>
Informant 2	<i>"As front-line teachers, I have no opportunity to participate in the formulation of quality assurance policies. As policy makers, who will guarantee their teaching quality?"</i>
Informant 3	<i>"I haven't seen the documents about effective classroom certification, but I asked teachers who passed the certification last time how to prepare materials and implement the course."</i>
Informant 4	<i>"As far as I know, after passing the effective classroom certification, only 50 class hours will be added to the total class hours of that semester, and there is no other reward."</i> <i>"Because of the epidemic, my online teaching cost me some extra money. For example, network fees and equipment purchase cost. But our school did not provide financial support."</i>

Informant 5 *“I don’t have the English tour guide certificate, so I didn’t have the opportunity to go to a tourism company for social practice. Moreover, in the course of teaching, my students majored in tourism management. Due to the lack of professional knowledge of tourism English, I couldn’t smoothly carry out the teaching.”*

This connotes that there are significant statements that were disclosed by some discipline teachers. The reliability of the instrument is confirmed by testing and retesting. The experimental test was conducted among teachers who had participated in the “Effective classroom certification” for the past year (which was held twice a year within the whole school, to apply for the certification of teachers comprehensive assessment. With the improvement of teaching quality as the main line, the reform of classroom teaching and the innovation of talent training mode as the focus, the renewal of vocational education classroom teaching concepts, innovation of classroom teaching methods, reform of classroom teaching mode, the enhancement of teachers’ classroom teaching ability, the enhancement of students’ independent learning ability, practical ability and innovation ability, the overall enhancement of the quality and level of talent training in our college. In the implementation process, we should effectively combine the “effective classroom” certification, the construction of online course resources and the competition of teachers’ teaching ability, so as to truly implement the effectiveness of effective classroom certification and improve work efficiency). The trial-test was done on selected 10 teachers. The trial was conducted twice with a two-week interval between tests. A reliability coefficient is obtained by using Pearson product moment method to show the reliability of the instrument. The questionnaire was compiled by So Jump APP and then sent to their Tencent QQ account. The questions were completed in time and returned immediately, and the researchers then exported the results. Data were analyzed using frequency counts and percentages.

3. Result and Discussion

Table 3.1 Profile of Respondents

Profile	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sex	Male	10	19.2
	Female	42	80.8
	Total	52	100
Age	From fifty years old and upward	9	17.3
	From thirty years old to forty-nine	43	82.7

	Total	52	100
	Master degree	36	69.2
Highest Education	Bachelor degree or above	16	30.8
	Total	52	100
	More than twenty years	19	36.5
	From ten years to nineteen years	30	57.7
Length of Service	Less than 9 years	3	5.8
	Total	52	100

Table 3.2 Instrument

Statement	4		3		2		1	
	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1. Inadequate understanding of learning condition	35	67.3	17	32.7	0	0	0	0
2. Insufficient participation in the formulation of quality assurance policies	34	65.3	18	34.7	0	0	0	0
3. Inadequate educational quality assurance training	25	48.1	17	32.7	8	15.4	2	3.8
4. Imperfect teacher performance appraisal system	31	59.6	14	26.9	7	13.5	0	0
5. Inadequate funding support for online teaching activities (during the pandemic)	32	61.5	20	38.5	0	0	0	0

6. A shortage of

having the

qualification	19	36.5	33	63.5	0	0	0	0
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certificate of the

related profession

(1) To find out if inadequate understanding of learning condition is a problem for teachers to implement quality assurance measures. The results show that 67.3% of the respondents ticked strongly agree while 32.7% ticked agree that lack of understanding of learning conditions is a problem faced by teachers in implementing quality assurance measures. This implication of this result is that 100% of respondents agreed that a lack of awareness of learning conditions is a problem faced by teachers implementing quality assurance measures.

(2) To find out if insufficient participation in the formulation of quality assurance policies is a problem faced by teachers in implementing quality assurance measures. The result disclosed that 65.3% of the respondents strongly agreed, while 34.7% agreed that insufficient participation in the formulation of quality assurance policies is a problem faced by teachers in implementing quality assurance measures. This means that teachers agreed that insufficient participation in the formulation of quality assurance policies is a problem faced by teachers in implementing quality assurance measures.

(3) To find out if inadequate educational quality assurance training is a problem for teachers to implement quality assurance measures. The results showed that 48.1% of respondents ticked strongly agree, 32.7% of the respondent ticked agree while 15.4% of the respondents ticked disagree and 3.8% ticked strongly disagree. This means that the majority of sampled respondents agree that inadequate educational quality assurance training is the cause of the problems faced by teachers in implementing quality assurance measures.

(4) To find out if the imperfect teacher performance appraisal system is a problem for teachers to implement quality assurance measures. The result revealed that 59.6% and 26.9% of the sampled respondents ticked strongly agree and agree respectively while 13.5% ticked disagree that imperfect teacher performance appraisal system is a problem faced by teachers in implementing quality assurance measures. This means that most teachers agreed that imperfect teacher performance appraisal system is a problem for teachers to implement quality assurance measures.

(5) To find out if inadequate funding support for online teaching activities (during the pandemic) is a problem for teachers to implement quality assurance measures. According to the results, 61.5% respondents choose strongly agree while 38.5% respondents choose agree that insufficient funding for online teaching is a problem faced by teachers when implementing quality assurance measures. This means that 100% of respondents agreed that the lack of school funding for teachers' online teaching and education during the pandemic was a problem for teachers to implement quality assurance measures.

(6) To find out if the shortage of having the qualification certificate of the related profession is a problem for teachers to implement quality assurance measures. The result showed that 36.5% of respondents ticked strongly agree, and 63.5% ticked agree that believed that the lack of relevant professional qualifications is a problem for teachers to implement quality assurance measures. This means that the teachers sampled in this study agreed that the shortage of relevant professional qualifications is a problem for teachers to implement quality assurance measures.

4. Conclusion

Result collected on each of the research question designed for the study showed that the sample respondents agreed that the problems faced by teachers in implementing quality assurance measures in Xianning Vocational and Technical College are inadequate understanding of learning conditions, insufficient participation in the formulation of quality assurance policies, poor education quality assurance training, imperfect teacher performance appraisal system, inadequate funding support for online teaching activities and the shortage of having the qualification certificate of the related profession. This also confirms the challenges and difficulties mentioned in the literature regarding teachers' implementation of quality assurance measures.

There are still some limitations in this study. It adopts convenience sampling approach and only selects teachers from four majors. This may not represent the entire population of teachers accurately. It could exclude teachers from other majors who might have valuable insights or experiences. It might exclude important viewpoints that could contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of this topic. Therefore, the findings and conclusions drawn from this sample may not be generalizable to all discipline teachers or educators.

Research on the challenges teachers faced in implementing quality assurance measures is a dynamic field with evolving trends and directions. Several potential future research directions can be considered: First, encouraging interdisciplinary research collaborations that bring together experts from education, psychology, sociology, and other fields can help gain a more holistic understanding of the challenges and potential solutions.

Second, studying the role of teacher advocacy and professional organizations in addressing quality assurance challenges is essential. Investigating how teachers can actively contribute to the development of assessment policies and practices is a valuable aspect of this research direction.

Lastly, conducting longitudinal research to assess the long-term effects of quality assurance measures on teachers' careers, job satisfaction, and retention in the profession can provide valuable insights into the impact of these measures over time.

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