

Suggestions to deepen the teaching innovation of Zhejiang Gongshang University*

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Abstract: Zhejiang Gongshang University is on the crucial turning from teaching-oriented university to the teaching-study-oriented university. How to deal properly with the relation between teaching and study researches is a pressing problem. This article offers several suggestions to deepen the teaching innovation based on the experiences of those famous home and domestic top universities, especially, Zhejiang University's education model called KAQ (Knowledge Ability and Quality).

Key words: reading-writing-discussing; KAQ; Tutorial System; SRTP

1. Introduction

The core issue of the 21st century is to cultivate the high quality people with innovative spirit and ability. The famous educationalist Conant who has ever been the president of Harvard University for 20 years once said: It is not the honor of the school premises and the number, but because of its culture of quality people from generation to generation. Modern university is requested to adjust the teaching philosophy and the traditional educational model, and to transform the teaching objectives, teaching content, and the teaching methods, to bring up the high quality students.

There are many researches about the teaching mode and methods, and some of them start off from several special classes. For instance, CHEN Zhi-xiang (2005) has studied the core curriculums of MBA. From the perspective of investigations and analysis which are necessary in the students' curriculum learning, he discussed methods to improve the teaching quality, and especially attached more attention on teaching material selection, the structure of course content and teaching methods and techniques. SHI Yu-zhu (2005) has compared the characters between the traditional teaching and the internet teaching. He discussed the important meaning of designing the teaching model under the internet environment, and designed the integration model. XIN Ji-xiang (2005) put forward the experienced-teaching-mode, which focuses on the students themselves, stressed the unique and independent character. WANG Jian-gou (2005) combined the practice experience and the intension of the education, and discussed the significations of the educational mode and the necessarily of the teacher's dominate status. All of these studies are developmental.

During the model transition of the higher education, the most influential one is the transition from traditional

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teaching-oriented university to the modern teaching-study-oriented university.

Research-oriented university has a long history although this given appellation has been put forward only for around 30 years. The famous educationalist Humboldt said the most important task of university is to create new knowledge and change the old ideology when he founded the Berlin University. He suggested the principle of free-study and the union of teaching and study which called the Humboldt principle in history. He is also the first man who created the seminar-teaching way which is famous for the discussing between the teachers and students. The American educationalist Burton, R. Clark (2001) said, "The action made by Humboldt's principle results in the unique study revolution. There is no other change can be compared with the rush and development of Research-Mode universities nowadays in the past eight centuries from Paris University in the 8th century to Stanford University and Tokyo University in 20th century".

In recent years, Zhejiang Gongshang University has developed rapidly. It is qualified to grant the doctor's degree in 2003 and changed the name from Hangzhou commercial college to Zhejiang Gongshang University. Now it is undergoing a crucial transition from teaching-oriented university to teaching-study-oriented university. On the request of human-oriented and education-oriented, we need more systemic, normative and scientific teaching methods.

2. The school characteristics on Zhejiang Gongshang University

Zhejiang Gongshang University has a history of 95 years, which was established in 1911, once named Hangzhou Vocational Business School. It changed the name for 16 times and changed the address twelve times. The tradition of recognition the teaching of undergraduate and the preciseness in Zhejiang Gongshang University made it the excellent university during the evaluation of undergraduate teaching works by Zhejiang Educational Office. Zhejiang Gongshang University has made lots of useful attempts and received abundant experience and characteristic, for example, the reading-writing-discussing activities, English dormitory, and the lectures of current affairs.

2.1 The reading-writing-discussing activities

Teaching methods for undergraduates in Zhejiang Gongshang University bear many forms with its own characteristics. Among those methods there is one named as the reading-writing-discussing activities, which is aimed to tap students' potentials and in fact yields rich results. The university vigorously launches these activities in order to enlarge students' knowledge, to tap their potentials and exercise their independence in learning, identifying problems and then solving the problems. The specific steps of the reading-writing-discussing activities are as following. First of all, for students who enroll in the curriculum which request applying what we learned in class to practice, such as economy and management, fiscal science and tourism management, they are obliged to read certain books related to their major in that academic semester. Basically the books are typical classic works, articles and cases recommended by teaching teachers. And students then have to read these materials comprehensively and write down their understandings or opinions or even analyze a case in their final articles. After finishing the articles, students then have to elaborate their articles in the class and discuss them with their classmates. All these will help students develop their reading, writing and speech delivering abilities.

2.2 English dormitory

Zhejiang Gongshang University have unfolded the program of English dormitory in 2001, aimed to rapidly enhance proficiency in English of undergraduates, to intensify English learning and to construct a good learning

climate. Initially English dormitories were voluntarily formed by freshmen who love English and hope to learn better. But now this program is carried out in the whole university. Eighty foreign students are invited to stay in our campus annually. The university provides board and lodging to the foreign students who came here to exchange. All that they have to do is that they should spend 4 hours chatting with our students in the dormitory in order to win the Teaching assistant scholarship. Students, who lives in English dormitories, are required to communicate in English when they are in the dormitory, take part in group training and frequently embark on activities related to English, such as speech delivery, debate and English corner etc.

2.3 “Five Contemporary Situations” lectures

The “Five Contemporary Situations” lecture series (a series of reports given on contemporary politics, economy, law, sciences and technology, as well as culture) was firstly laughed as a program in the year 1996, which had become regulatory thereafter. It serves to better education on current affair and policy in its vividness, timeliness, and epoch features. As is demonstrated above, there is an inherent connection between the school characteristic and the knowledge-ability-quality target in the university. Reading-writing-discussing system is a good case in point, which boasts a breakthrough from the isolated classroom and the teaching within, in the way its name suggests. Hence, knowledge together with experiences is accumulated.

These suggestions, however, were proposed on a teaching-oriented base. positioning itself as a teach and research oriented university, Zhejiang Gongshang university is now urged to explore corresponding methodology and education model, and the new are expect to be more systematic and more scientific. Up till now, quite a large number of research-oriented universities and colleges had pioneered in this transition and left numerous successful experiences. Of all the explorations, the author believes that KAQ mode is one of the most significant enlightenment.

3. The education mode of Zhejiang University

As a home and domestic top comprehensive university, early in 1995 Zhejiang University has put forward KAQ education model, that is, under the guideline of the thought of quality-oriented education, the university should construct a triple structure of knowledge, ability and quality for students and attach importance to develop talents who can coordinate their development of knowledge, ability and quality. Led by KAQ education mode, various innovation measures has been taken about the education of undergraduates in Zhejiang University, such as Student Research Training Program (SRTP) and carrying out undergraduate—Tutor System.

3.1 SRTP

Student Research Training Program is one of the important measures of undergraduate course practical education reforms of Zhejiang University, SRTP supplies students with certain scientific research funds and offers scientific research training opportunities, so that students could enter all kinds of special scientific research fields, touch the forward position of the subjects and learn about the development trends of the subjects. It is very beneficial for the students to strengthen their sense of innovation, enhance their ability of scientific practice, coordination and communication, therefore, students’ comprehensive qualities are improved and more and more splendid talents appear. Since 1998, SRTP has gained a remarkable effect that teachers and students have high enthusiasm in the participation, the quality of research project has been improved incessantly and students’ practical ability of scientific research has been strengthened.

3.2 Undergraduate—Tutorial System

In 2002, in order to carry forward the education reform and reinforce the close connection between tutors and undergraduates, Zhejiang University took another step to reform the education—undergraduate—Tutorial System. Undergraduate—Tutorial System is an interactive teaching system that tutors directly tutor, guide and direct undergraduates' thoughts, studies and daily life in order to improve students' qualities. Under the direction of tutors, students could, according to their interests and characters, choose the appropriate direction of development, obtain a good training of technical ability and cultivate the quality of innovation so as to develop their potential, show their personalities, and make a solid foundation for the further development in the future. Undergraduate—Tutorial System newly carried out regards it as an important point that teachers of high level participate in educating the undergraduates. Undergraduate—Tutorial System constructs a new mechanism of teaching and educating, create a new teaching environment of breaking through the traditional mode and find an effective way in which students' personalities and potential could be fully developed.

4. Suggestions about Zhejiang Gongshang University deepening education reforms

4.1 Stressing the humanity-oriented educational idea and taking the students as the subject

Establishing an educational idea of taking the students as the subject is an important direction of the development of Chinese higher education in the 21st century, an inevitable requirement of insisting on humanity-oriented educational idea, establishing an harmonious socialistic society and constructing an innovative state, as well as an actual reflect of transformation from the traditional way of education to a modern one. The biggest drawback of traditional education model is ignoring the students' position of subject and regard students as the container of accepting the knowledge passed on by teachers, by which we mean giver. Teacher teaches and the students imitate. Consequently, under such traditional education model, it seems that the students adhere to truth in their behavior, but their mind repel different opinions, be worldly-wise and play safe in their lift, and do things conforming to conventions (LAI Mao-de, 2002). Establishing an education idea of taking students as the subject is the objective requirement of abolishing the disadvantages of traditional education mode.

4.2 Strengthening the scientific research program and investment

The ability, level and achievement of scientific research are the important aspect of weighting the level of a university. The scientific research work is the basis of teaching work and whether the university and teachers could have a foothold or not also depends on it. Recently, there has been an inevitable trend that Zhejiang Gongshang University is to strengthen the scientific research work in case of its high level of teaching, so the university point that it should transform to “a teaching and scientific researching university” and push improving the ability and the level of scientific research to a strategic height. Only the teachers who have done some scientific researches in the special fields with forward academic view, solid specialty base, abundant store of knowledge and strict attitude to teaching, could cultivate the students' ability of research and develop their potential of research. Teaching and learning could help each other. The scientific research can promote the teaching and teachers' academic ability can improve the quality of teaching. So the education reforms could be carried out effectively and the transformation of the university could go well.

4.3 Enhancing the academic communication and coordination

The link of academic communication in many local universities is very weak, which greatly influences the scientific research. First, holding some activities of academic communication in high level could direct the teachers to stand at the forward position, broaden their way of thought to improve the academic level, promote all

kinds of subjects to be crossed and merged together, establish a good scientific research environment, mold the teachers' way of thought, promote the development of scientific research in local universities at high layer. Secondly, activities of academic communication could expand the influence of the universities, enhance the reputation, perfect the social network, and establish a scientific community at a high layer home and abroad. Thirdly, activities of academic communication could stimulate the enthusiasm of academics, promote academics of all kinds of subjects to make up a scientific research group, accelerate the development of leaders of various subjects.

4.4 Full implementation of undergraduate—Tutorial System

Undergraduate—Tutorial System means that the academics act as the tutors of the undergraduates, educate and direct their studies, thoughts and daily life to reflect that the teachers play a leading part and the students play a subject-oriented part in the process of teaching and education. Undergraduate—Tutorial System is an operating mechanism of quality-oriented education inside the universities, a supplement of the teaching in class and support classroom teaching, guarantee the teachers' leading role, as well as make the students devote themselves to their studies and develop their personalities under the direction of their teachers. Avoiding the disadvantage that the teachers just care about the students' studies, Undergraduate—Tutorial System asks the teachers to not only direct the students' studies, papers and intern, but also care about their thoughts, life and employment. Therefore, it establishes a new relationship between teachers and students, promote each other's help on scientific research, as well as create a new researching and creative teaching method.

According to the actual situations of Zhejiang Gongshang University, carrying out undergraduate—Tutorial System is not only the requirement of urgent situations, but also the inevitable trends of development. First, since the whole Zhejiang Gongshang University developed to a new area in 2003, there has been a long distance between teachers and students. Students live far away in the suburbs and the teachers go back after class by school bus, so that the teachers could only get touch with students in class, even the discussion after class is very short and in a hurry. As for guidance after class, discussion about special subject, communication of feelings, there hasn't been enough time for them. There is a limit to the communication between teachers and students. In the mean time, the assistants couldn't take good care of so many students. So it is very important to carry out undergraduate—Tutor System. Secondly, Zhejiang Gongshang University has been carrying out "children strategy" and there has been a tradition that the teachers treat all the students as their children, giving their emotional education, all of which offer an guarantee to carry out undergraduate—Tutor System.

Some colleges in Zhejiang Gongshang University have taken the lead in trying out undergraduate—Tutorial System, taking public management College for example, in 2004, it began to carry out undergraduate—Tutorial System. Every freshman had a tutor and every teacher was responsible for 6 to 8 students. Teachers and students keep in touch with each other regularly. From grade 1 to 4, the tutors would direct the students in their course selecting, social practice, scientific study and so on, at the same time, the teachers could communicate with the students deeply. On one side, all of these not only give an advice to the students' daily life and studies as well as make their personalities; on the other side, the students could enter special fields as soon as possible and improve their qualities, therefore, this measure was very popular with the students. The experience of Public Management College is a good start, which made foundations for the spread of undergraduate—Tutor System around the university.

Firstly, carrying out undergraduate—Tutorial System should define the range of the tutor's duty and object of the job. Secondly, undergraduate—Tutorial System should take all kinds of forms of activities. At last, the

university should enhance the arrangement of the undergraduate—Tutorial System to guarantee that it could be carried out effectively.

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