

A Practical Exploration of Process Assessment Teaching Reform

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Abstract: In order to effectively promote higher education reform, colleges and universities should focus not only on basic knowledge learning, but also on improving students' quality, skills, and comprehensive literacy. Through practical experience, it can be seen that the cultivation of students' comprehensive quality needs to be implemented in all teaching links, among which the assessment link is no exception. In order to enhance the effectiveness and advanced nature of the teaching evaluation mechanism, it is necessary for colleges and universities to reform the real-time process assessment. Other educational departments should also pay more attention and place importance on this work, integrating it with the curriculum to optimize the evaluation link.

Keywords: Process assessment; Reform in education; Practical exploration

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1. Introduction

At the 19th National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party, it was clearly stipulated that effective measures should be taken to promote the connotative development of higher education. Therefore, colleges and universities should actively respond to the international call and explore effective measures to improve their teaching quality. Process assessment is an effective way to improve the education quality and talent cultivation ability. Taking our teaching experience as the starting point, this paper analyzes the problems existing in the college curriculum assessment and evaluation, discusses the importance of carrying out process assessment teaching reform, and proposes a practical and feasible path so as to provide reference for college educators to implement the process assessment teaching reform.

2. Existing problems in college curriculum assessment and evaluation

2.1. Solely emphasizing on the results while neglecting the process

In view of the traditional teaching mode, some teachers are deeply influenced by story thinking, and they tend to emphasize the evaluation results over the process ^[1]. In the course assessment process, the usual score, which comprises the sum of scores from daily attendance and after-school assignments, accounts for less than one-third of the total score. Hence, students tend to pay less attention to classroom participation and after-class learning. They often only focus on their studies at the end of the term. Additionally, this last-minute studying only involves memorizing key points and common types of questions. Although they are able to achieve high scores in their examinations, these scores do not objectively and comprehensively reflect the students' learning status and actual academic level. Moreover, it is difficult to improve students' comprehensive quality and quality skills towards the end of the term ^[2].

2.2. Old method and one-sided content

In addition to the aforementioned problems, the assessment standards set by many colleges and universities are fixed, and the assessment content is rigid and lacks scientificity and comprehensiveness^[3]. Periodic examinations are mainly written examinations, while usual scores comprise the sum of scores from daily attendance and after-school assignments. The way the scores are structured ensues a passive learning state among students. Although students can be supervised via these scores, they do not stimulate students' sense of autonomy. Due to limited time and the single-stage examination, the final examination lacks practicality. In addition, the assessment and evaluation criteria are unclear because some questions in the final written examination are open-ended; hence, it is difficult to formulate a unified scoring standard^[4]. Inevitably, there will be mistakes when marking these papers, resulting in a certain gap in the expected results, which would virtually undermine the students' enthusiasm to participate in subsequent course learning. Therefore, it is urgent for teachers to rectify the issues in the final examination papers.

3. Importance of process assessment teaching reform in colleges and universities

3.1. Connotation of process assessment

Process assessment, as the name suggests, refers to a form of assessment aimed at the learning process. Specifically, it is a process of assessing, supervising, and evaluating students' knowledge, skills, abilities, and literacy by relying on effective, scientific, and reasonable methods. It runs through the entire learning process and is a flexible, comprehensive, and effective assessment method^[5]. Process assessment has several advantages. First, it has a flexible evaluation method. Process assessment is composed of multiple-stage assessments and final assessments. It is an assessment mode that revolves around the entire learning or practice process of students. Therefore, it can be flexibly applied to various teaching projects. Second, the assessment results are comprehensive. In colleges and universities, assessment is often divided into two parts: one is the final grade assessment, which is known as result assessment, and the other is the usual assessment, which is known as process assessment^[6]. By comparing the two, the latter can comprehensively reflect the students' learning situation, thus allowing teachers to obtain more accurate pre-school feedback and take effective measures to carry out teaching reform and further improve the teaching effectiveness.

3.2. Role of process assessment teaching reform

In the "Outline of China's National Plan for Medium and Long-Term Education Reform and Development," the following views are emphasized: it is necessary to optimize the teaching evaluation mechanism in colleges and universities and strive to promote the internationalization of education and teaching in colleges and universities; in addition, it is important to optimize and improve the process assessment, so that the entire process and multi-dimensional tracking and evaluation of curriculum teaching can be carried out, thus improving the quality and efficiency of curriculum teaching. The aforementioned points are not only the key contents of teaching reform in colleges and universities, but also the necessary steps to improve the quality of talent cultivation. The assessment and evaluation reform in colleges and universities plays a vital role in curriculum quality monitoring. At this stage, some colleges and universities have begun to introduce process assessment links. Combined with practical research, we can see that there are still many problems in this process, such as the lack of unified normative documents and guidelines, the lenient implementation of assessment standards, and the unreasonable setting of the process assessment structure. In addition, the insignificant assessment results, coupled with the disadvantages of result assessment, are not conducive to steady quality improvement. Based on the constructivist theory, knowledge and ability are constructed through continuous stimulation and response in the process of practice. By formulating an ideal process assessment mechanism and adjusting the teaching plan in consideration of the assessment results, we can

effectively improve the teaching quality, optimize the learning effect, promote the reform of higher education and teaching, as well as cultivate the required talents for social development and national construction ^[7].

4. The practical path of carrying out process assessment teaching reform in colleges and universities

4.1. Innovation index system based on process assessment

A good assessment index system is a prerequisite for carrying out process assessment teaching reform. With regard to this, colleges and universities should consider the specific requirements in process assessment, divide practice assessment into different levels, and reasonably set the proportion of final grades (result assessment) and ordinary grades (process assessment), ensuring that the ratio of process assessment is less than 20%, so as to highlight its value ^[8]. First of all, with regard to usual assessment, specific indicators must be designed. For instance, attendance and classroom performance can be included. Attendance, on the one hand, should account for more than 10% of the usual assessment in order to highlight the binding nature of attendance. The assessment of classroom performance, on the other hand, has a huge impact on students' learning enthusiasm and learning effectiveness. Considering the actual educational practice, the majority of students show good classroom performance. Moreover, teachers are unable to improve students' learning ability and enthusiasm through certain educational guidance measures. Hence, the proportion of this part of the assessment should be reduced from 10% to 5%. Secondly, in terms of final grades, it is necessary to ensure the diversity of their dimensions. Specifically, practical assessment and theoretical assessment can be designed in line with specific course content. At the same time, each assessment can be supplemented by individual and group performance assessments. By fixing these indicators, students' enthusiasm and potential for learning can be further enhanced, along with the learning quality and teaching effect.

4.2. Mobilize personnel from other departments of colleges and universities to participate cooperatively

In the process of carrying out education and teaching reform in colleges and universities, we should emphasize the main responsibility of the colleges and universities and regard the construction of high-level undergraduate education as the key project of the reform and development of tertiary institutions ^[9]. With regard to this, it is necessary to formulate teaching plans, clarify the objectives of the construction, and formulate safeguard measures in line with the school-running strategy and the situation of each school. The organization and members of the Party committee of colleges and universities should carry out regular research and academic exchange activities, while the Secretary, President, and person-in-charge should participate in practical teaching activities; relevant departments and personnel should not only implement the work content, but also be responsible for organizing and implementing, so as to achieve the expected results. First, from the perspective of colleges and universities, these institutions should modify their teaching strategies, optimize their teaching plans, and clarify the construction objectives and key tasks, so as to provide support for the teaching reform ^[10]. Second, from the perspective of the education administration department, it is necessary to update the teaching concept in a timely manner, optimize the education administration management mechanism, and provide project support for the process assessment teaching reform. In 2017, the Curriculum Assessment Reform Project was organized by the Academic Affairs Office of Hebei University. More than 30 process assessment teaching reform projects passed the professional review. Since then, the project was carried out every semester. In addition, the logistics department, student office, and other departments should jointly promote the process of this teaching reform, so as to lay the foundation for the smooth implementation of teaching reform.

4.3. Stimulate teachers' initiative to participate in assessment reform

Colleges and universities should be fully aware that teachers' professional quality, practical ability, and professional level have a direct and an indirect impact on the entire teaching reform process. With regard to this, colleges and universities should build a high-level and responsible teacher team to provide support for the optimization of the teaching reform. First, it is necessary to improve teachers' sense of responsibility. A teacher's main task is to teach and educate people. Therefore, teachers need to recall their original purpose. Being a teacher is their identity, and teaching is their primary task. This team of teachers should help cultivate the enthusiasm and motivation of teachers for education and teaching in a stepwise manner so that the teachers can devote themselves to the teaching work ^[11]. Second, the incentive policy must be improved by adjusting the proportion of education and teaching in the Professional Title Evaluation and position promotion. In practical research, it can be seen that some colleges and universities tend to focus on scientific research more than teaching. In such environment, teachers would consider scientific research to be more important than teaching, thus devoting their time and energy to scientific research, which will eventually affect the quality of education and teaching ^[12]. In order to counter this phenomenon, colleges and universities should formulate good incentive policies to link teaching with annual evaluation and performance, so as to highlight the importance of education and teaching. By increasing work remuneration and recognition, it is possible to stimulate teachers' enthusiasm to participate in teaching activities as well as their sense of responsibility and pride. In that way, they would devote themselves to teaching and cultivating high-quality talents. Furthermore, it would be beneficial to hasten the transformation of scientific research achievements and integrate them, along with advanced teaching methods in scientific research, into classroom teaching so as to realize a virtuous cycle between teaching and scientific research and enhance the participation of teachers. In that way, educational ideas and advanced methods can be integrated into practical reform ^[13].

4.4. Mobilizing students' enthusiasm to participate in teaching reform

Negative emotions and rebellious feelings among students are inevitable when carrying out process assessment teaching reform, and some may even think, "Other courses can be successfully ended, but why should this course have an antilock assessment system?" or "We are able to pass the closing examination through last-minute revision in the past, but why is this course so strict?". Teachers should be fully aware that students are the main body of process assessment teaching reform; thus, they must make effort to stimulate the enthusiasm of students to participate in teaching reform and patiently guide them to establish correct values ^[14]. First, teachers must be able to guide the students well, so that the students can understand that the ultimate beneficiary of the assessment reform is they themselves. The purpose of promoting process assessment teaching reform is to improve students' comprehensive quality and abilities. Second, it is necessary to cultivate students' outlook on life. The high-efficiency stage is not only an important stage that determines the direction of students' life development, but also a key period to expand their cognitive vision and enrich their knowledge system. Therefore, teachers need to guide students to resist temptation, overcome impetuosity, devote themselves to curriculum learning and off-campus practice, complete learning tasks, and gain practical experience in this key stage so as to improve their comprehensive quality. Third, we should cultivate the sense of struggle among students and cultivate their moral quality ^[15]. At the National Education Conference, it was clearly put forward that we should earnestly cultivate students' fighting spirit in college education, guide students to establish lofty goals and firm beliefs under the guidance of core values, and enable the participation of students in classroom learning with a full mental state and objective life attitude so that they can devote themselves to learning, be brave in face of hardships, and eventually be able to complete the learning tasks and analyze the teaching results.

5. Conclusion

In order to adapt to the developing trend of modern education and teaching, colleges and universities need to explore the real-time path of process assessment teaching reform, including mobilizing the collaborative participation of personnel from other departments of colleges and universities, stimulating teachers' initiative to participate in assessment reform, and mobilizing students' enthusiasm to participate in teaching reform, in order to formulate a supporting assessment mechanism that is in line with the curriculum outline and teaching needs. By increasing the assessment proportion of practical operation, off-campus training, and classroom performance, we can comprehensively and objectively evaluate students' mastery of the course content, provide an effective basis for further optimizing the teaching plan, and improve the process of education and teaching reform.

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