

Professional Bottlenecks and Targeted Suggestions for Young Teachers in Vocational Colleges

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Abstract: This paper discusses the weaknesses young teachers in vocational colleges, including insufficient teaching and research skills, and limited professional development and career progression. Targeted recommendations involve fostering young teachers' teaching skills and research capabilities through mentorship, training, research participation and skills competitions. Addressing these bottlenecks effectively develops young teachers' competencies, contributing innovative ideas and practices to improve vocational education quality, cementing their role as the next generation of vocational educators.

Keywords: Young teachers; Vocational colleges; Professional bottlenecks; Vocational education

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1. Introduction

Vocational education plays an essential role in preparing students for the workforce and supporting economic growth. It equips them with practical skills and knowledge necessary for various industries. Therefore, the quality of vocational education is critical for the development of the economy and society. The quality of vocational education is highly dependent on the teachers. Teachers are the foundation of high-quality vocational education^[1,2]. They are responsible for designing and delivering effective lessons, managing classrooms, and providing guidance and mentorship to their students. Hence, the high-quality development of vocational colleges relies heavily on the quality of their teachers^[3,4]. Previous studies have explored the composition of teaching staff in vocational education and their impact on students' academic achievement. Agasisti^[5] found that the teaching staff quality significantly influences academic performance, and the need to prioritize it in educational policy was emphasized. Additionally, Deng^[6] and Cui^[7] highlighted the importance of school-enterprise cooperation for teachers' career development. Cui^[7] specifically suggested the joint training of "double-qualified" teachers as a means to bridge the gap between schools and enterprises. Guo^[8] analyzed the career development of young teachers and identified a lack of practical teaching skills as a common issue. He recommended that universities offer opportunities for young teachers to study in enterprises. Peng^[9] argued that a high-level teacher team is essential for the development of higher education institutions.

Young teachers play a critical role in the development of vocational colleges as they bring fresh perspectives and innovative ideas to the field. However, they face several bottlenecks in their career development, such as lack of teaching experience, access to mentorship, and professional development opportunities. This paper aims to analyze these bottlenecks and provide targeted suggestions to address these challenges. The content of this article will include an analysis of the challenges faced by young teachers in vocational colleges and relevant countermeasures for administrators and young teachers to improve the career development of young teachers and the quality of vocational education. By addressing these bottlenecks and promoting the development of young teachers, vocational education can continue to play a critical role in supporting economic growth and social development.

2. Bottlenecks in the career development of young teachers

Young teachers in vocational colleges face several bottlenecks in their career development, which can hinder their ability to succeed in their careers and contribute to the development of vocational education. In this chapter, we will examine these bottlenecks in detail, including teaching skills and pedagogy, research and innovation, professional development, student guidance and mentorship, administrative responsibilities, and career advancement.

2.1. Teaching skills and pedagogy

Effective teaching skills and pedagogy are essential for young teachers in vocational colleges to succeed in their careers. However, young teachers may face several bottlenecks in this aspect, including lack of teaching experience, access to mentorship, time, and resources, and insufficient feedback on their teaching performance. Lack of teaching experience can make it difficult for young teachers to design and deliver effective lessons, manage classrooms effectively, and engage students in learning. Access to mentorship is crucial for young teachers to develop their teaching skills and receive feedback on their performance. However, young teachers may lack access to experienced mentors who can guide them in their teaching activities. Time and resource constraints may also make it difficult for young teachers to devote adequate time and attention to teaching activities.

2.2. Research and innovation

Research and innovation are crucial for the development of vocational education, and young teachers in vocational colleges are expected to engage in research activities and contribute to the development of new teaching methods and approaches. However, young teachers may face several bottlenecks in this aspect, including lack of research experience, limited access to research resources, heavy workload, and lack of mentorship. Lack of research experience can make it difficult for young teachers to develop research ideas, design effective research studies, and analyze data. Limited access to research resources such as funding, equipment, and research networks can also hinder their ability to engage in research activities. Heavy workload and lack of mentorship can make it difficult for young teachers to engage in research and innovation activities and contribute to the development of the field.

2.3. Professional development

Professional development is essential for young teachers in vocational colleges to stay up-to-date with the latest trends and best practices in their field. However, young teachers may face several bottlenecks in this aspect, including limited professional development opportunities, time constraints, financial constraints, and lack of

mentorship. Limited professional development opportunities, such as workshops, conferences, and training programs, can make it difficult for young teachers to stay up-to-date with the latest trends and best practices in their field. Time and financial constraints may also make it difficult for young teachers to devote adequate time and resources to professional development activities. Lack of mentorship can make it difficult for young teachers to identify and pursue professional development opportunities that are relevant to their career goals.

2.4. Student guidance and mentorship

Young teachers in vocational colleges are expected to guide and mentor their students to help them develop their skills and achieve their career goals. However, this may be challenging for young teachers due to their lack of experience, heavy workload, and limited resources. Lack of experience can make it difficult for young teachers to develop effective mentoring relationships and help their students achieve their career goals. Besides, heavy workload can make it difficult for young teachers to devote adequate time and attention to student guidance and mentorship activities. Limited resources, such as career counseling services or mentorship networks, can hinder their ability to provide effective guidance and mentorship to their students.

2.5. Administrative responsibilities

Young teachers in vocational colleges have administrative responsibilities such as managing course schedules, grading assignments, and other administrative tasks in addition to teaching. However, these responsibilities can also hamper their career development. Administrative responsibilities can be time-consuming and may take away from time that could be used for professional development or research activities. Young teachers may lack training in administrative tasks, which can make it difficult for them to manage their administrative responsibilities effectively. Limited resources, such as administrative support staff or technology, can hinder their ability to manage their administrative responsibilities effectively.

2.6. Career advancement

Young teachers in vocational colleges need clear guidance and support for career advancement. However, young teachers may face several bottlenecks in this aspect, including lack of transparency in the promotion process, limited opportunities, and becoming stagnant in their careers. Lack of transparency in the promotion process can make it difficult for young teachers to understand what is required to achieve promotion and how to advance in their careers. Limited opportunities for promotion can make it difficult for young teachers to advance in their careers and may lead to stagnation. Young teachers may also become stagnant in their careers due to lack of career guidance and mentorship.

In conclusion, young teachers in vocational colleges face several bottlenecks in their career development, including teaching skills and pedagogy, research and innovation, professional development, student guidance and mentorship, administrative responsibilities, and career advancement. Addressing these bottlenecks requires a comprehensive approach that includes mentorship, access to resources and training, tailored professional development opportunities, administrative support, and clear guidance and support for career advancement. By addressing these challenges, young teachers in vocational colleges can develop the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in their careers and contribute to the development of vocational education.

3. Targeted suggestion

3.1. Seek guidance from experienced teachers

Mentorship and guidance from experienced teachers are invaluable for young teachers in vocational colleges to

develop teaching skills and receive feedback on their performance. Encouraging young teachers to seek advice from more experienced colleagues in their field is crucial. Experienced teachers can offer guidance on effective teaching strategies, classroom management, and student engagement, among other areas. They can also provide constructive feedback on teaching performance and offer opportunities for young teachers to observe their classes. Administrators can facilitate mentoring relationships by pairing experienced teachers with young teachers and providing time and resources for mentorship activities.

3.2. Attend professional development sessions

Professional development is essential for young teachers in vocational colleges to stay current with the latest trends and best practices in their field. Encouraging young teachers to attend more training sessions, such as workshops, conferences, and training programs, is crucial. These sessions provide opportunities for young teachers to learn new teaching strategies, develop research skills, and network with colleagues in their field. Administrators can facilitate attendance at training sessions by providing financial support, time off from teaching responsibilities, and guidance on relevant training opportunities.

3.3. Actively participate in scientific research and academic activities

Engaging in scientific research and academic activities is essential for young teachers in vocational colleges to contribute to the development of vocational education and advance their careers. Encouraging young teachers to actively participate in various scientific research and academic activities, such as publishing research papers, presenting at conferences, and serving on academic committees, is crucial. These activities can help young teachers develop research skills, build professional networks, and gain recognition in their field. Administrators can facilitate participation in scientific research and academic activities by providing funding, time off from teaching responsibilities, and guidance on relevant opportunities.

3.4. Guiding students to participate in skills competitions

Encouraging students to participate in skills competitions is an effective way for young teachers in vocational colleges to develop their teaching skills, engage students in learning, and promote vocational education. Skills competitions provide opportunities for students to showcase their skills and compete with their peers, which can motivate them to excel in their studies. Teachers can use skills competitions to develop effective teaching strategies, identify areas for improvement, and promote vocational education. Administrators can encourage student participation in skills competitions by providing financial support, time off from teaching responsibilities, and guidance on relevant opportunities.

Addressing the challenges in the career development of young teachers in vocational colleges requires a comprehensive approach that includes seeking guidance from experienced teachers, attending professional development sessions, actively participating in scientific research and academic activities, and encouraging student participation in skills competitions. By implementing these targeted suggestions, young teachers can develop the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in their careers and contribute to the development of vocational education. Administrators play a crucial role in facilitating these activities by providing mentorship, financial support, time off from teaching responsibilities, and guidance on relevant opportunities.

4. Conclusions

In conclusion, the career development of young teachers in vocational colleges is crucial for the quality of vocational education. This paper has highlighted several bottlenecks that young teachers face, including a lack

of teaching experience, limited mentorship, and insufficient professional development opportunities. Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive approach that involves administrators and young teachers working together to implement targeted suggestions. Consulting experienced teachers, attending training sessions, participating in scientific research and academic activities, and encouraging student participation in skills competitions are effective ways to overcome these bottlenecks. By offering mentorship, financial support, time off from teaching responsibilities, and guidance on opportunities, administrators can facilitate the professional development of young teachers and enhance the quality of vocational education. It is essential to recognize the critical role that young teachers play in the development of vocational education. Young teachers bring fresh perspectives, innovative ideas, and enthusiasm to the field, which is vital for the future of vocational education. Therefore, administrators must prioritize the development of young teachers and provide them with the resources and support they need to succeed in their careers.

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Author contributions

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