

Chapter 1

Learning to Teach During Novice Years: A Case Study on an Elementary School in Xi'an, China

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ABSTRACT

The novice teacher's training is playing an important role in the education reform. In Xi'an Gaoxin No.1 Primary School, the school leaders host a pilot way of training the new teachers. The new teacher training of the school is special and meaningful. The training not only includes professional skill, student management, and teacher's ethics, but also includes art, calligraphy, reading, and so on. The authors invested 73 teachers (male=9, female=64) who had got the job one year ago. After one year's training, 73.97% of novice teachers express full agreement about the training and are quite satisfied with the training. Comparing with the beginning of the career, the novice teachers have improved the teaching abilities a lot.

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INTRODUCTION

Since the end of the 20th century, Chinese teacher training has witnessed a change from being quantity-oriented to being more quality-oriented (Rao, 2013). Therefore, the teacher's professional development has gained importance (Li, Li, Yao & Guo, 2015). In the context of Chinese education reform, novice teacher training is an important part of new teacher development (Wang, 2003). The novice teacher training gives the newly-qualified teacher at least a year support which is planned, systematic and continuous (Wang, 2003).

The novice teachers are in a period of transition between beginning training and their professional lives (Nelson et al., 2017). There are many difficulties for them to overcome. If the novice teachers wish to become a quality teacher, they must learn class management, how to effectively work with peers and build relationships with students. Training quality teachers and ensuring the quality of teaching is a key to schooling reform and student development, as well as supporting a teacher's life-long development. Quality teaching is identified as a key influence on high quality outcomes for diverse students (Quality Teaching for Diverse Students in Schooling: Best Evidence Synthesis Iteration (BES), 2017) and a cornerstone of current education reform (Yuan, 2005). Meanwhile, pre-service professional development is regarded as an important way of the novice teacher's development (Darling-Hammond, 2013).

In China, the Ministry of Education established *The Promotion Plan of 21st Education* at the end of 1998. The plan promotes the development of teacher training effectively. The research on novice teacher training has been increasing since 1986 in China CNKI (China National Knowledge Internet) (see Figure 1). The Chinese novice teacher training has gone through multiple developments. Before 2000, the novice teacher training just focused on the continuing education, only if the novice teachers pass the placement exam, they can teach the students as a formal teacher. But after 2000, the novice teacher training began to change where a lot of teacher training models appeared. For example, Dong Xiaobing raised *The Trilogy of Novice Teacher Training* to cover pre-job training, follow-up training and on-the-job training (Dong, 2000). In 2000, the teacher training school of Dongxiang County in China created *the Six Steps Novice Teacher Training Methods*: viewing, pilot teaching, symposium, review, writing and competition (training school of Dongxiang, 2000). Additionally, Li Beilong, a training school teacher, also suggested the novice teacher training should prolong the time from one year training of probation period to three year training of improving in order to enhance the quality of the novice teachers training (Li, 2000).

However, the Chinese government has emphasized greatly the quality of the novice teacher training and the technical skills after the 1900s. Zhang Yikang and Xu Yuru, teachers from Linyi Teachers' College, thought the teacher training should

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