The Research on Practice and Reflections of Teaching Supervision in Secondary Colleges of Application-oriented Universities : A Case Study of Minjiang University

Yu Lin*

Minjiang University, 200 Xiyuangong Road, University Town, Fuzhou City, Fujian Province, China

lyfish03@163.com

*Corresponding author

Abstract: Teaching supervision is a crucial element of the teaching quality monitoring and assurance system in secondary colleges of application-oriented universities, playing a vital role in enhancing higher education quality. This paper addresses current issues in teaching supervision in secondary colleges at applied university include inadequate team construction, limited variety in supervision methods, and the absence of effective feedback mechanisms, etc. This research proposes continuous improvement strategies based on these issues. Meanwhile, it was firstly shared the effective explorations and practices of the Clothing and Design Faculty at Minjiang University in team construction, teaching supervision modes, feedback mechanisms, and incentive systems, aiming to provide insights and references for further advancing teaching supervision and enhancing teaching quality and increasing supervision effectiveness.

1. Introduction

Application-oriented universities aim to cultivate technical talents with practical and innovative abilities to meet the demands of local economic and social development for high-level professionals[1]. Teaching supervision is a crucial mechanism for enhancing quality monitoring and improving teaching standards, serving as the cornerstone of the teaching quality assurance system. However, the effectiveness of teaching supervision predominantly relies on university-level efforts, while the supervision work in secondary colleges often receives insufficient attention[2]. This paper aims to address these issues by analyzing the current challenges in teaching supervision within secondary colleges at application-oriented universities. It proposes continuous improvement strategies and presents the exploratory practices implemented by the Clothing and Design Faculty at Minjiang University (hereinafter referred to as "Clothing and Design Faculty") in their teaching supervision efforts. Furthermore, the paper offers reflections on how to enhance the teaching supervision system in secondary colleges of application-oriented universities, providing insights for future improvements.

2. Current Challenges in Teaching Supervision at Secondary Colleges of Application-Oriented Universities

2.1. Unreasonable Construction of the Teaching Supervision Team

The construction of the teaching supervision team is crucial for promoting the effective implementation and refinement of teaching supervision work. However, there are common issues in the construction of teaching supervision teams at secondary colleges of application-oriented universities, such as unreasonable team structures and insufficient professionalization. Secondary colleges often require experienced and excellent teachers to serve as teaching supervisors. However, many secondary colleges only select department heads or directors of teaching and research offices

as supervision team members. Consequently, they would lack the energy and time to participate fully in teaching supervision, with their own heavily daily teaching and research works. Additionally, teaching supervision teams mainly consist of internal teachers, lacking professionals from enterprises and industries for specialized evaluation and guidance. This disconnection leads to a misalignment between teaching supervision work and the current models, concepts, and needs of application-oriented talent cultivation[3]. Furthermore, supervisors often assume their roles through simple internal recommendations without systematic training, resulting in a low level of professionalization in teaching supervision. Hence, the knowledge and skills of the supervision team fail to keep pace with the latest developments in the education field, making it difficult to propose constructive solutions for improving teaching quality.

2.2. Monotony and Lack of Comprehensive Planning in Teaching Supervision Work

Teaching supervision encompasses various aspects of college teaching activities, including supervising teaching, learning, and management. However, most secondary colleges focus their supervision efforts primarily on routine classroom observations and evaluations, neglecting other critical areas such as the inspection of teaching materials, monitoring student learning status, assessing teaching management and conditions, and evaluating teaching improvement efforts. This narrow focus leads to issues like monotonous supervision methods, simplified supervision content, and limited coverage of supervision activities. Furthermore, there is a significant lack of overall planning in teaching supervision, with many secondary colleges failing to align their supervision work with the specific needs and circumstances of their institutions. Supervisors often struggle to achieve long-term observation and dynamic review of the same course, typically making evaluations based on isolated teaching segments[4]. The results confirmed that a superficial approach to evaluating classroom teaching leads to imprecise assessments of teaching quality.

2.3. Lack of Timely and Effective Feedback Mechanism in Teaching Supervision

Teaching supervision evaluation feedback is a crucial aspect of the teaching supervision process. It establishes an effective mechanism for monitoring teaching quality by promptly relaying supervision results to relevant teachers and departments [5]. However, current practices in secondary colleges show deficiencies in establishing timely and effective feedback mechanisms for teaching supervision. Feedback mechanism on teaching supervision often lags behind due to several reasons. Supervision teams frequently provide minimal face-to-face feedback and communication with teachers after classroom observations, delaying the transmission of feedback and reducing the impact of corrective actions. Besides, some colleges still rely on traditional methods where feedback is consolidated monthly by supervision team secretaries, resulting in delayed communication and lack of attention from those being supervised. Moreover, most colleges do not mandate supervised individuals to submit corrective measures, leading to insufficient attention to feedback and suggestions, thereby failing to establish a constructive feedback loop.

3. Strategies and Methodologies for Continuous Improvement in Teaching Supervision

3.1. Optimizing the Structure of Teaching Supervision Teams

Prioritize optimizing the team structure by clearly defining selection criteria for supervision team members. Emphasize selecting teachers with extensive teaching and educational management experience, a strong sense of responsibility, fairness, and high energy levels[6]. Additionally, involve managers or technical experts from enterprises and industries to participate in practical teaching guidance, ensuring thorough implementation of teaching supervision tasks. Besides, strengthen supervisor training through offline collective sessions and online platforms. Provide systematic pre-service and ongoing training for teaching supervisors at secondary colleges. This training should include updating educational philosophies and exploring new methods and initiatives in educational reform to foster innovation awareness[7]. Furthermore, convene regular internal teaching supervision meetings within the college. These meetings serve to share interim

supervision findings, exchange work experiences, and collectively enhance the overall competence and professionalism of the teaching supervision team.

3.2. Expanding Supervision Methods and Developing Supervision Work Plans

Secondary colleges should expand the forms of teaching supervision, scientifically formulate annual teaching supervision work plans, and enhance the targeted and effective nature of supervision efforts to avoid superficiality[8]. This involves integrating routine and specialized supervision efforts. Alongside routine teaching supervision, there should be a focus on specialized supervision tasks related to developing talent training programs, faculty team construction, laboratory development, discipline and specialty enhancement, and academic culture improvement. These specialized supervisions aim to provide constructive feedback and advisory support for strengthening and enhancing teaching practices.

3.3. Enhancing the Feedback Mechanism in Teaching Supervision

Secondary colleges should adopt a dual approach of "point-to-point" and "comprehensive" feedback in their teaching supervision practices. The secretaries of the supervision teams will compile and promptly deliver feedback and suggestions to relevant teachers, enabling them to quickly grasp both the strengths and weaknesses of their teaching processes. Additionally, during teaching seminars convened by the college, there should be a focused review of supervision feedback. This collective effort aims to address common issues, exchange ideas, discuss solutions, and implement targeted measures promptly to enhance teaching quality. Moreover, leveraging modern internet technology, the college can digitize supervision results. This approach allows supervised individuals to access guidance suggestions online. Simultaneously, college leaders and supervisors can monitor the progress of supervision activities in real-time, thereby enhancing the overall effectiveness of supervision efforts.

4. Exploring Reform in Teaching Supervision at Secondary Colleges of Application-Oriented Universities: A Case Study of the Clothing and Design Faculty

To address the current challenges in teaching supervision at secondary colleges of applied universities, the Clothing and Design Faculty at Minjiang University has significantly bolstered its teaching and educational management efforts. It has proactively explored and implemented strategies in team development, work methodologies, incentive systems, and other aspects of supervision, resulting in tangible improvements.

4.1. Enhancing Development of the Teaching Supervision Team

The Clothing and Design Faculty upholds the principle of "mainly full-time supervision with part-time supervision as auxiliary" in constructing its supervision team. Currently, the team consists of 5 full-time members: 1 team leader, 3 members, and 1 secretary, alongside 2 part-time members whose roles are flexible. The team leader is appointed by the vice dean responsible for teaching and oversees not only routine supervision tasks but also leads in top-level design, coordination, and implementation of all aspects of teaching supervision. The supervision secretary, assigned by the teaching secretary, manages communication, notifications, and the compilation of teaching supervision results. Team members are selected through internal recommendations from three disciplines, emphasizing a strong sense of responsibility and extensive teaching and management experience. They are ineligible for department head positions or higher to ensure their full dedication to teaching supervision. Depending on the specific needs of supervision tasks, the school hires managers or technical experts from enterprises or industries as part-time members to guide practical teaching, internships, and thesis projects. Currently, the school's teaching supervision team boasts a balanced age structure, encompassing members from the 30s, 40s, and 50s age groups, strategically combining full-time and part-time roles to optimize effectiveness and efficiency.

4.2. Standardizing the Mode of Teaching Supervision

The Clothing and Design Faculty integrates regular and specialized supervision to advance the standardization and scientific approach of teaching supervision, thereby enhancing its specificity, effectiveness, and comprehensiveness. Each semester, every member of the supervision team attends a minimum of 24 class sessions, supported by detailed plans developed at the semester's outset. These plans comprehensively cover various aspects, including teacher types (internal versus external), teacher demographics (age, academic rank), and course types (theory versus practical). The supervision team places a strong emphasis on mentoring young teachers, with particular attention given to newly recruited teachers, newly launched courses, and the continuous improvement of teaching methods to elevate overall teaching quality. Courses that receive substantial feedback from school supervisors, peers, and students undergo multiple follow-up observations, with timely feedback and recommendations provided. Additionally, targeted inspections and supervision are conducted for practical teaching, internships, thesis projects (design), and laboratory facilities to ensure rigorous examination of each course and material. This rigorous approach ensures that teaching and management practices adhere to standardized norms. For instance, specialized inspections are conducted at the beginning of the academic year to ensure the quality of initial lessons, followed by focused oversight of thesis projects (design) in June (end of semester).

4.3. Driving Effective Supervision Feedback: Oversight & Encouragement

The Clothing and Design Faculty adheres to the principle of "guiding through supervision, rooted in guidance", establishing a timely and effective feedback mechanism for teaching supervision focused on guiding instructors. Using the "Minjiang College Teaching Quality Evaluation System" mini-program, the supervision team conducts real-time evaluations of classroom teaching. Instructors can access the mini-program to review their teaching evaluations promptly. Furthermore, the supervision secretary compiles and organizes feedback and suggestions gathered from classroom observations. They provide personalized, timely feedback to instructors, prompting them to reflect on their teaching methods and submit improvement plans. This approach ensures a constructive two-way feedback process. For specific inspections such as course exam archives and thesis projects (design), a closed-loop system is implemented: teachers conduct self-checks, departments perform mutual inspections, the school supervision team conducts inspections, and teachers implement necessary improvements (Figure 1).
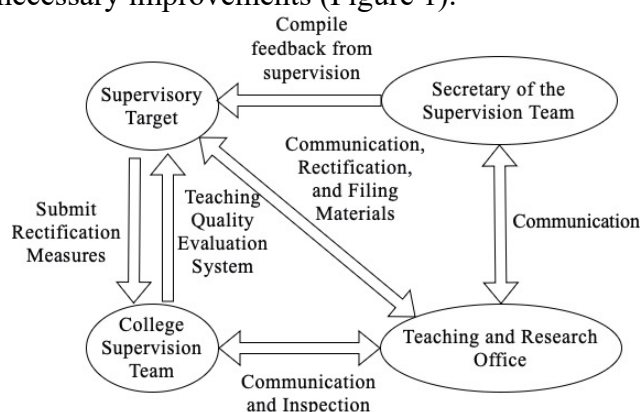

Figure 1: Structure of teaching supervision feedback mechanism at the Clothing and Design Faculty

4.4. Enhancing Teaching Management Systems and Refining Teaching Supervision Incentive Mechanisms

The Clothing and Design Faculty has standardized its teaching supervision system, focusing on bolstering undergraduate education and enhancing quality monitoring. It has developed comprehensive documents for managing teaching quality across theoretical and practical teaching, graduation design supervision, and talent development. A key outcome of these efforts is the

<Compilation of Teaching Management Regulations of the Clothing and Design Faculty>, which includes guidelines for selecting supervisors for graduation theses (designs). In August 2023, updates were made to documents such as <Regulations on the Selection of Supervisors for Graduation Theses>, <Supplementary Regulations on Graduation Theses at the Clothing and Design Faculty of Minjiang University>, and the <Management Measures of the Teaching Supervision Team of the Clothing and Design Faculty of Minjiang University>. Additionally, the <Charter of the Guidance Committee for Teaching Work at the Clothing and Design Faculty of Minjiang University> was established.

The <Management Measures of the Teaching Supervision Team of the Clothing and Design Faculty at Minjiang University>, in conjunction with the <Implementation Measures for Performance Allowances in the Clothing Faculty>, detail rights and benefits for the supervision team. These enhancements in the incentive mechanism have significantly boosted the team's enthusiasm, laying a robust foundation for cultivating a more capable and efficiently structured teaching supervision team within the faculty.

5. Conclusion

Teaching supervision in secondary colleges is a crucial safeguard for promoting higher education reform and innovation and comprehensively improving the quality of education and teaching in application-oriented universities. The Clothing and Design Faculty at Minjiang University has made significant strides in strengthening its teaching supervision team, exploring new supervision models, and enhancing feedback and incentive mechanisms. These efforts have yielded valuable results, serving as a reference for other secondary colleges looking to advance their teaching supervision practices. Future efforts will focus on a deeper analysis and reflection on issues arising during the supervision process to further enhance the monitoring of teaching quality and promote the high-quality development of education and teaching. This aims to further enhance the monitoring of teaching quality and promote the high-quality development of education and teaching.

References

[1] Zhang, Y. (2018) Transformation from local universities to application-oriented universities in China: 4 core elements. 4th International Conference on Social Science and Higher Education (ICSSHE 2018). Atlantis Press, 2018: 125-128.

[2] Tyagi, R.S. (2010) School-based instructional supervision and the effective professional development of teachers. Compare, 40(1): 111-125.

[3] Zhang, M., Lu, F.T., and Long, S.P. (2020) The Practical Dilemma and Path Exploration of Teaching Supervision in Colleges and Universities in the New Era. International Journal of New Developments in Education, 2(8).

[4] Gohar, A.S., and Qouta, M.M. (2021) Challenges of improving the quality of academic supervision of postgraduate studies at the faculty of education, damietta University. Journal of Educational Issues, 7(1): 113-137.

[5] Hunukumbure A D, Smith S F, Das S. Holistic feedback approach with video and peer discussion under teacher supervision[J]. BMC medical education, 2017(17): 1-10.

[6] Zhang, S., and Zhao, F. (2022) Construction of Teaching Supervision System of Applied Undergraduate Colleges and Universities under the Perspective of "Internet+". Journal of Environmental and Public Health, 2022(1): 127-133.

[7] Gao, G. (2019) Research on the Construction of Teaching Quality Evaluation Index System Based on the Two-Level Supervision System of the University and College. Creative Education Studies, 7(3): 351-358.

[8] Mosavi, F. (2014) Present a Conceptual Framework of Supervisory System for Teacher. Journal of Educational and Management Studies, 4(4): 738-744.