

# The Problems, Causes and Countermeasures of Secondary School Teachers' Professional Development at Agriculture & Pastoral Areas of Tibet: Taking A County in Changdu Area as an Example

SHI Ying<sup>[a],\*</sup>; TU Mingjiang<sup>[b]</sup>

<sup>[a]</sup>Lecturer, Chongqing Institute of Engineering, Chongqing, China.

<sup>[b]</sup>Research Assistant, Chongqing Research Academy of Education Sciences, Chongqing, China.

\*Corresponding author.

Received 16 February 2016; accepted 11 April 2016

Published online 26 May 2016

## Abstract

Due to its special natural and geographical environment in Tibet area, resulting in secondary school teachers' professional development is faced with different characteristics from teachers at inland provinces, the specifically points are the whole teachers specialization degree is low, quality of in-service teacher training is not high, the workload of teachers larger and the loss of teachers are seriously. The reason is influenced by the natural environment, the economic and social development, the teacher management features and the source of the teacher. From the five aspects to solve the problem: improve the salaries of teachers, improve the teachers' training mode, increase local training teacher training, transform the teacher's management style to create a community of teachers professional development and cultivate the teacher's professional autonomous development ability

**Key words:** Agricultural & pastoral areas; Teachers' professional development; The special nature

Shi, Y., & Tu, M. J. (2016). The Problems, Causes and Countermeasures of Secondary School Teachers' Professional Development at Agriculture & Pastoral Areas of Tibet: Taking A County in Changdu Area as an Example. *Higher Education of Social Science*, 10(5), 35-40. Available from: URL: <http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/hess/article/view/8431> DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3968/8431>

## INTRODUCTION

Tibet region is sparsely populated, has special natural and geographical environment, plateau hypoxia, the ecological

environment is fragile, brought great inconvenience and challenges to local people's daily production and living activities. Therefore, in history, the level of economic and social development in Tibet is relatively low. However, after the peaceful liberation of Tibet, the central government has provided a full range of support for its development, and has made great progress in the social development. In general, the school education development need to rely on two points, on the one hand, the improvement of school buildings, teaching equipment and other material conditions; on the other hand, a number of high-quality teachers. The government can improve the school conditions through increase financial input, but outstanding teacher resources shortage and uneven distribution of urban and rural areas can not solve in a short period of time. In short, the lower professional level of teachers becomes the bottleneck which restricts the further development of the compulsory education in Tibet. Due to the sparsely populated at Changdu area, each county has only one middle school, this paper selects the a county middle school encoded as "A" in Changdu as an example, describes the status quo and problems of the school teachers' professional development, based on the situation propose solutions, to promote the continuous improvement of middle school teachers' professional development level in agricultural and pastoral areas.

## 1. THE PROBLEMS OF SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AT AGRICULTURAL AND PASTORAL AREAS OF TIBET

### 1.1 Teachers' Specialization Degree Is Low

As for 2013, there are 118 teachers in A county secondary school, according to the provisions of the number of secondary school teachers in the county in the Education

Law of China, there are 2,668 students in the school, still lacks of 42 teachers. As shown in Table 1, the overall situation of the school teachers as the following: Firstly, teachers' professional technology level is low, intermediate and senior titles accounted for only 56.81% of the total number, especially low numbers of senior professional titles of teachers; secondly, the distribution of teacher education and the qualified rate (college or

above) is 92.37%, there is still 7.63% of teachers does not meet the national minimum requirements, the school has yet to have teachers to obtain a master's degree or above, teachers' education level is low; Thirdly, the age distribution of teachers is mainly young teachers and older teachers, the number of outstanding young teachers is small, teachers' age structure is unreasonable; fourthly, a larger number of group teachers are outland.

**Table 1**  
**Teachers' Basic Information Summary of A County**

Basic information	Specific circumstances	Percent
Job title	Senior title: 6	5.11%
	Intermediate title: 61	51.70%
Educational background	Bachelor degree: 49	41.53%
	Specialist: 60	50.84%
	High school/polytechnic: 9	7.63%
Age	Over 45 years old: 39	33.05%
	Between 30-45 years old: 22	18.64%
	Between 20-30 years old: 57	48.31%
Native place	Local teachers: 38	32.20%
	Tibetan teachers outside the county: 32	27.12%
	Non Tibetan mainland teachers: 48	40.68%

The shortage of teacher quantity can easily cause the teachers' teaching task heavily, the class time increase and the heavy workload of the teachers, and then the improvement of the education quality can not achieve. Due to the number of new teachers are added, the main problems existing in the new teacher's performance in two aspects, one is the new teachers' teaching skills are low, two is unreasonable subject structure, the relative shortage of teachers of Tibetan, English, music, sports, art, computer science, can not meet the normal needs of teaching.

### 1.2 The Teacher In-Service Training Is Less Chance and Low Level

Teachers' professional development needs not only the special training of the pre service training stage, but also the continuous learning and study during the on-the-job period. Learning and training plays a crucial role in promoting teachers' professional development, especially for Tibet agricultural and pastoral areas of secondary school teachers, in-service training can not only spread the new philosophy of education, can also promote the perfect knowledge structure, the teacher's professional knowledge and professional skills can be developed. However, the secondary school teachers in A county of Changdu area did not get enough, high-quality on-the-job training opportunities. Specifically, the first is to participate in national and provincial teacher training opportunities for less, only 15 teachers participated in the national teacher training, most of the

teachers is difficult to have the opportunity to obtain high-level training opportunities. Secondly, the county administrative department of Education organized teacher training is often due to lack of funds, personnel shortages and formality, is generally carried out from teaching through competition, competitions and other forms, the training time is short, poor results. Finally, the school-based training organization also often due to fatigue and enjoy undeserved fame, survey found that school-based training, lack of pertinence, often learning policy documents, curriculum plan, the lack of related problems on the development of teachers encounter in the process of teaching, teacher-student relationship and professional attention.

### 1.3 The Workload of Teachers Is Large

Because of the insufficient number of secondary school teachers in A County, the workload of teachers is relatively large. What's more, teachers should not only take the normal education and teaching responsibilities, but also take some other functions. For example, at first, bear the task of reducing the dropout rate, Affected by the economic and social development in Changdu area, the rate of local compulsory education students drop out is higher, especially Cordyceps season, by the drive of economic interest, most families are good at digging caterpillar fungus to make money, teachers in order to maintain the normal order of teaching, in addition to ideological education for the students, also should conduct regular home visits, persuade farmers to send their

children to school. Second, responsible for adult literacy teaching, due to the lack of literacy of full-time teachers, secondary school teachers in agricultural and pastoral areas constitute one of the main sources of teachers of literacy. Third, because of the secondary school has a boarding school system, students only on long holidays will be home from school, in order to prevent outside criminals mixed damage to them, teachers should be responsible for the safety of the students in school. According to rough estimates, the average weekly workload of teachers at least 60 hours or more. The high workload inevitably diverted agricultural and pastoral areas of teachers' leisure time, and even some teachers reflect no extra time for further education and learning. Thus, it further increases the pressure of the teachers, resulting in the phenomenon of job burnout is obvious. On the one hand, there is no time for teachers to study, on the other hand, it can cause the teachers' lack of energy and motivation to care for their own professional development.

#### 1.4 The Phenomenon of Teacher Loss Is Serious

The intention of teacher flow is to promote the reasonable allocation of the resources in the region, but unreasonable teacher flow tends to widen the gap between schools. The loss of A county secondary school teacher is very serious, from 2011 to 2013, there were 41 teachers have lost, but in the same period only three teachers to fill the vacancy, serious loss will cause the shortage of teachers, and affect the stability.

**Table 2**  
**The Statistics of Teacher Outflow at A County Secondary School During 2011-2013**

	Percent of total population in A county
The total number of teachers flow (person)	41
Gender(male)	17 (41.46%)
Educational background (bachelor degree)	30 (73.17%)
Job title (Intermediate or above)	29 (70.73%)
Native Place (Outside Changdu)	30 (73.17%)
Age (25-30)	16 (39.02%)
Age (31-45)	20 (48.78%)
Working years (3-5)	13 (31.71%)
Working years (10-15)	25 (60.96%)

The Table 2 shows that A county secondary school teachers flow performance for the following characteristics. First, the outflow of teachers with new recruits for the novice teachers and young backbone teachers, showing a trend of highly educated and young age; second, the outflow of teachers mostly are outsiders, around 30, accounting for 73.1% of the proportion of the total number of all teachers; the third, migrant teachers' gender difference is not big, inland teachers flow mainly in a male dominated, the outflow teachers' gender

difference is not obvious at agricultural and pastoral areas, male teachers accounted for only 41.46% out of the total number. In addition, the flow of teachers with high frequency, high speed, short time will lead loss of teachers become too large, or even lead to paralysis of the normal teaching order. The loss of teachers easily caused a large amount of school teachers to ignore their own professional development, and is not conducive to the formation of the community of teachers professional development.

## 2. CAUSES OF DIFFICULTIES IN SECONDARY TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AT AGRICULTURAL AND PASTORAL AREA OF TIBET

### 2.1 The Characteristics of Natural Environment

The Tibet is located in the hinterland of Qinghai Tibet Plateau, forming a unique natural geographical area, especially in the eastern Tibet gorge area, Changdu is known for its steep terrain, high mountains and deep valleys are the basic characteristics of Changdu. The average altitude of Changdu is above 3,500 meters, some of the altitude of the agricultural and pastoral areas is even more than 4,000 meters, the living environment is particularly harsh. On the one hand, the high altitude terrain has great influence on the regional climate, production and transportation, resulting in agricultural and pastoral areas of poor communication with the outside world; on the other hand is easy to increase the probability of this life of the residents suffering from altitude sickness, heart disease, cataracts and other diseases, even can cause life-threatening. Especially for those teachers who work at the field of youth how to survive in this environment has become the primary test. Psychologist Maslow proposed the Need Hierarchy Theory, the highest human needs—self realization is based on the physiological needs and safety needs have been satisfied. For many outland teachers, survival crisis has become a big challenge; also affect the professional development of teachers.

### 2.2 The Characteristics of Economic Development

The Changdu area is the typical blood transfusion type finance, namely the local revenue ability is lower, can only depend on the superior government's financial transfer to maintain the local revenue and expenditure balance. From Table 3, it can be seen that in 2005 revenue of 1.04 billion yuan, fiscal expenditure to 9.94 billion yuan, the deficit reached 8.9 billion yuan; to 2011 fiscal revenue is only 3.54 billion yuan and expenditure amounted to 41.10 billion yuan, deficit of 37.56 billion yuan; 2012 revenue 5.02 billion yuan, in the same period of fiscal expenditure 61.16 million yuan, deficit as high

as 56.14 billion yuan. Obviously, the economic ability of the region of Changdu is very poor, and it must depend on the financial help to support the normal operation of regional social economy.

**Table 3**  
**Changdu Regional Financial Revenue and Expenditure Tables** (Unit: billion yuan)

Year	2005	2011	2012
Income	1.04	3.54	5.02
Expenditure	9.94	41.10	61.16

Note. *Statistical Yearbook of Tibet*, (2013).

Lack of local financial resources on the one hand cannot scale to improve school infrastructure construction; on the other hand also leads to low teacher salaries and benefits, thereby affecting their enthusiasm for work, worried about the life all day and no mind focus on their professional growth. In addition, low wages become one of the important factors affecting the stability of teachers, the particularity is not prominent in agricultural and pastoral areas in the treatment of teachers, teachers' overall low salaries in Tibet agricultural and pastoral areas is an important reason for the outflow of a large number of outstanding teachers.

### 2.3 The Characteristics of Teacher Management

The school is the most frequent contact management mechanism of teachers' daily work life the influence of the management mode is also the most obvious. The survey found that agricultural and pastoral areas schools' teacher management is general exhibit extensive mechanical, regard the teachers as managed object completely, ignoring the emotional needs of teachers, even ignores the teacher's subjective initiative. Such as the attendance system regulations in the school of A County, morning exercises, calisthenics absent once charged 20 yuan; the absence of a flag-raising ceremony charged 50 yuan, 10 yuan charged late. Other group activities absent once charged 20 yuan. Meeting absent a deduction of 20 yuan. School organization of work unfinished buckles 50 yuan each. Non-compliance with leave procedures (in text form) debit 50 yuan. No reason to cut class charged 200 yuan each; tardiness charged 20 yuan each; absenteeism charged 50 yuan each. The school teacher's management is very stiff and lack of humane care, under such a system will be always on tenterhooks all day teachers, lest half step over the line. In addition, few schools in agricultural and pastoral areas to actively create favorable conditions for the professional development of teachers, professional development path is narrow, the prospects for the development of occupation positioning fuzzy, is not conducive to teachers, dampen their enthusiasm for work.

### 2.4 The Characteristics of Teachers Sources

After years of investment and the parties continued efforts, Tibet gradually constructed by the secondary

school, college and bachelor degree formed a relatively complete teacher education system. However, due to the special environment, economic development and teacher training in Tibet autonomous region, the number of teachers in local colleges is seriously scarce. The teachers of compulsory education in Changdu area are introduced from the field of field. From Table 1, there are 118 teachers in A county secondary school, including 38 local teachers, 32 Tibetan teachers outside A County, and 48 non Tibetan teachers from the mainland. That is to say, A county secondary school has 40.48% teachers are not Tibetan; nearly half of the teachers are from outside Tibet's inland provinces. This is likely to cause problems in two aspects: on the one hand, a considerable part of the A county secondary school teacher is introduced from the mainland, do not have the ability to use the Tibetan language, Tibetan students do not have the same learning ability as inland students, language teaching has become one of the major "bottleneck" in teaching practice.

According to the survey, the inland teachers due to poor communication caused by low self-efficacy resulted job transfer accounted for 37% At the same time, the Tibetan students' academic foundation, learning motivation, learning ability, value judgment and cultural are different because they formed the unique cultural background, is undoubtedly a huge challenge for inland teachers. Therefore, in the teaching based on equal pay, outland teachers have low senses of achievement. (Tu & He, 2015)

On the other hand, outland teachers are uprooted, alone a person or couple both sides to Tibet to teach, children and parents still stay in the inland home, because of family life and children's education they think it's difficult to feel easily in teaching, always want to seek the opportunity to repatriate the origin.. The survey also found that, 78% outland teachers is to mobilize the work because of family factors, especially female teachers, because of the need to take care of the family and more urgent expectations back home. Therefore, outland teachers are difficult to concentrate on their professional development because of the influence of communication and family factors.

## 3. COUNTERMEASURES TO PROMOTE THE AGRICULTURAL AND PASTORAL AREAS OF TIBET SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### 3.1 Improve the Wages and Welfare

Rawls (1988) pointed out: "In the case of the justice is fair, only when the country compensates each individual interest especially the most disadvantaged members of the community, the society is justice." Therefore,

for the need of the development of compulsory education and social fairness and justice, the central government

should increase basic education financial transfer payments of agricultural and pastoral areas of Tibet to improve school conditions, teachers' wages and benefits. Through the provision of medical and housing security for agricultural and pastoral areas teachers, and provide preferential policies for family life and children's education demands, solve their worries. In addition, for the actual situation of poor school conditions and hard life in remote areas, we can set up special post allowance system. (Tu & He, 2015)

At present, three areas of Tibet are divided with the altitude, below 4,000 meters in the second area, elevation 4,000-4,500 meters is the third area, more than 4,500 meters and above for fourth. According to the altitude and hard degree, improve the teachers' special post allowance, so that teachers can live comfortably and concentrate more on their professional development; at the same time, further improve the teacher's welfare based on the existing preferential policies, can also attract good teachers.

### **3.2 Take Various Forms of Teacher Training Model**

From the perspective of organizational level division, teacher training can be divided into countries training level, province (city) level training, municipal training, county (city) level training and school-based training. We should make full use of the several forms of training to promote professional development of teachers in primary and secondary schools in agricultural and pastoral areas. First, increase the "national training" efforts, relying on the mainland high level university to provide high quality training for teachers in primary and middle schools. Second, give full play to the University of Tibet as a national professional and technical personnel continuing education base function, expand the scope and strength of the autonomous region level training, increase teachers further education opportunities. Third, carry out counterpart support training mode. In view of the reality that the quality of teacher education is not high in Tibet, it is recommended Changdu area teacher training mode can be adopted by the mainland counterpart support Tibetan form to carry out. Such as Tianjin city, Chongqing city and Sichuan Province are Changdu's counterpart support, experience more and made a significant contribution to the economic and social development in Changdu. Therefore, teachers training in Changdu area can be carried out by their counterparts in Tibet project, relying on the normal colleges such as Southwestern University, Tianjin Normal University and Sichuan Normal University to carry out in-service training of teachers, provide more quality learning opportunities for teachers in agricultural and pastoral areas, and promote the professional growth of teachers.

### **3.3 Increase the Proportion of Tibetan Students in Pre Service Teacher Training**

At present, only three universities of Tibet recruit professional normal major, there are Tibet University,

Tibet Institute of Nationalities and Lhasa normal college school. In addition, the secondary vocational and technical schools in Tibetan still train pre-school and primary school teachers. In 2012, for example, the undergraduate education professional recruit 420 people, while the total area of Tibet secondary school (including junior school, high school, technical secondary school) recruit 256, on average each secondary school less than two Tibetan students (Anonymous, 2013). Overall, the cultivation scale of Tibetan students still cannot meet the demand of middle school education in agricultural and pastoral areas. Because the Tibetan teachers have the advantages of language and culture, and the local teachers also have strong stability. Therefore, strengthening teacher professional enrollment, improve the reserves of Tibetan teachers, can effectively alleviate the problem of insufficient Tibetan teachers for basic education, but also to promote the school teachers stability and is beneficial to improve the professional level of teachers.

### **3.4 Change the Teacher Management Style and Create the Community of Teachers' Professional Development**

Change teacher management style and implement humanized management, so that teachers become the main body of the school, not the object of management. Establish professional interests and responsibilities in the management of the school management model, can let the teachers fit for its needs and social demands, also can reflect the characteristics of the teaching profession superiority. In addition, the improvement of teachers' quality is more via the real education situation, theoretical knowledge and skills training methods acquisition ultimately required the implementation of teaching practice can be internalized into the individual teacher's professional ability. Training cost is high, and teachers' lack of more serious, in preparing teachers itself is in overload condition, training is bound to further stimulate the contradiction between study and work. In addition, the content and the way of training the students in common is designed based on the actual demand, is not necessarily suitable for each school and teachers. Visible, creating a community of teachers professional development can effectively make up the insufficiency of the external training, and promote the formation of democracy and harmonious culture of teacher professional development atmosphere, make the teacher can be obtained for the professional level of self realization base on the school level. Can take the way of research, lesson study, collective lesson preparation, to discuss, in addition, for the novice teachers can be with excellent teachers who has rich teaching experience as a teacher, to help them adapt to the new environment as soon as possible and get professional growth.

### 3.5 Cultivate the Professional Spirit of Reflection; Develop the Ability With Professional Self-Development

Self consciousness is a fully aware of individual existence and its value and significance, and design life base on the individual purpose, relying on the personal struggle to achieve a sense of self-worth. Is a self hosted by the individual independent consciousness, its characteristic are individuality, highlight the novelty, the heterogeneous unique consciousness, and pay attention to human nature, defend human rights, the pursuit of humanity consciousness. (Wu, 2011)

Self consciousness is the important inner drive for the teachers' professional development, and the premise of the teachers' ability to develop themselves. Without professional self-consciousness, individual teachers can not become the main body of their own professional development, and the improvement of professional standards is also impossible to talk about. Reflection is an important mechanism of teacher professional development, become the reflection is the inevitable requirement of the professional development of teachers, USA psychologist Posner proposed that teachers' growth is "experience + reflection", so reflection is important in the professional development of teachers. Reflection on teaching experience as a precondition, teaching reflection focusing on the formation of critical thinking, foster strengths and circumvent weaknesses, so as to achieve the teaching innovation and professional growth. Specifically, teachers can enhance the ability of independent professional development through the following ways: First, through continuous learning and reading cultural classics, in order to enrich their own educational thoughts, enhance the professional reflection of the cognitive reserve; Second, to develop the habit and ability of teaching reflection, such as writing

reflective diary, describing teaching situation, organizing exchange and teaching action research, etc., in order to improve the reflective ability.

---

## CONCLUSION

---

In short, enhance the level of professional development in agricultural and pastoral areas of Tibet secondary school teachers, has a great relationship with the quality of school education increased. Due to the unique natural environment of Tibet, the economic, social development and cultural practices, in the process of improving the level of teachers' professional development will face of different problems with the mainland provinces. The professional development of the agricultural and pastoral areas in Tibet requires not only the strong support from the state and the government, but also need continuous efforts of the individual teachers.

---

## REFERENCES

---

- Anonymous. (2013). The Statistics Bureau of Tibet Autonomous region series (81, 280, 286, 287). *Statistical Yearbook of Tibet*. Beijing: China Statistical Press.
- Rawls, J. (1988). *A theory of justice* (p.14). Beijing: China Social Science Press.
- Tu, M, J., & He, N, K. (2015). The particularity analysis of teachers flow in primary and secondary schools in Tibet pastoral areas—Taking A & B counties in Changdu area as examples. *Educational Theory and Practice*, (5).
- Wu. Y. (2011). Self sovereignty research on teacher professional development: Self-development and self-reflection. *Journal of Tianjin Academy of Educational Science*, (1).