

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND CURRENT STATE OF TEACHER TRAINING IN CHINA

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### *Quality of teacher training is a criterion for the effectiveness of education*

*The article deals with the historical background and present state of teacher training in Chinese educational institutions. The issues of teacher training historical development, current trends, content and analysis of an experimental platform for educational innovations in teacher education are under consideration.*

**Introduction.** Education may be considered as the foundation for the development of a country. There is a close link between the future and the destiny of the country and the quality of education. In this case the professionalism of teachers and their educational and teaching concepts are the key factors affecting the quality of education. In recent years the Chinese teacher training system has been significantly updated, the main trends in its development have been identified.

Taking into account that the quality of the future teacher's professional training is regarded as the main criterion for the state and effectiveness of the modern Chinese educational system, the analysis of the historical features and the search for the possible ways of teacher's training improvement seems to be relevant.

**Main part.** The earliest teacher training in China can be traced back to the pre-Qin period (21st century B.C.-221 B.C.) represented by Confucius, who taught knowledge and moral concepts through the teacher-apprentice system. Confucius advocated "teaching without discrimination" and "teaching according to ability" and trained a large number of disciples. In addition to Confucius, thinkers such as Mozi and Mencius also trained students through private schools. From the Han Dynasty to the Tang Dynasty (206 B.C.E.-907 A.D.), the official government set up educational institutions such as the Imperial College and the Imperial College of the State to train officials and teachers, while private schools continued to exist in the form of the teacher-apprentice system; the training of teachers was based on the Confucian classics, with an emphasis on ethical cultivation and academic inheritance. From Song Dynasty to Qing Dynasty (960–1911) the academy became an important educational institution, such as Bailudong Academy, Yuelu Academy, etc. It was both the center of academic research and a base for teacher training,

and teacher training was closely integrated with the imperial examinations, and teachers were required to be well-versed in the Confucian classics and the eight-legged essay. Due to the education reform in the late Qing Dynasty (1840–1911) teacher training began to introduce Western scientific knowledge and education concepts. In 1897 Sheng Xuanhuai founded the Nanyang Public School Normal College, which has become the first teacher training school in modern China. During the Republic of China (1912–1949), the government established the system of teacher training schools, divided into higher teacher training colleges and general teacher training colleges to train primary and secondary school teachers; educators such as Cai Yuanpei and Tao Hsingzhi promoted educational reforms and advocated the concepts of "education for national salvation" and "education for life", which contributed to the diversification of educational ideas. Cai Yuanpei, Tao Xingzhi and other educators promoted the educational reform, advocating "education to save the country" and "education for life" and contributed to the diversification of educational thought. After the founding of New China (1949), the government made great efforts to develop teacher education, establishing a number of teacher training colleges and universities, and focusing teacher training on ideological and political education and labor practice, with a certain political orientation. In the early period of the reform and opening up (1978–1999), teacher training was restored and developed: after the resumption of the college entrance examination, teacher education received renewed attention, it was gradually standardized, and in-service teacher training was introduced to enhance teachers' professional competence. Since the beginning of the 21st century, teacher training has been systematized: national training programs such as the "National Training

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Program” and the “Provincial Training Program” have been implemented to cover teachers in rural and remote areas; the integration of information technology and teacher training has been promoted, and online training and blended learning have been carried out, and international exchanges and cooperation in teacher training have been strengthened in order to enhance the international vision and competitiveness of teachers.

So, teacher training in China has developed from ancient times to the present day, forming a relatively stable teacher training system, which can be divided into two categories, public teacher training and private teacher training, according to the different organizing bodies; the two have their own characteristics in the terms of objectives, contents, forms and resources, and together they form a complete framework for teacher training.

Public teacher training is mainly organized by the Government, education administrative departments and public schools, and it is authoritative, systematic and public-spirited, and it is a core part of the national teacher training system.

Private teacher training, on the other hand, is provided by private educational institutions, enterprises and social organizations in a flexible and diverse manner, with an emphasis on marketization and individualized needs. Private teacher training is more flexible and diverse and meets individualized needs. The two complement each other and together promote the professional development of China’s teaching force.

The current status of teacher training in China is characterized by seven points.

The first point on the current state of teacher training is that it is policy-oriented. From 2016 to 2025 China’s teacher training policy is committed to comprehensively improving the overall quality of the teaching force and promoting the modernization and high-quality development of education. Taking recent teacher training documents as an example, we can mention the “Implementation Plan for Strategic Action on Education Digitization” issued by the Ministry of Education in 2023, which is based on the rapid development of information technology and the fact that digitization has become an important trend in the global education reform, while China’s education system is faced with the urban-rural gap, uneven distribution of resources, etc. Digitalization is a key tool for solving these problems.

Vocational education teacher training has also received a lot of attention. In the same year, the Ministry of Education issued the “Opinions on Deepening the Construction of Vocational Education Teacher Teams in the New Era”, which mainly focuses on the problems of insufficient number of teachers, irrational structure and on the need to improve the professional ability of China’s

vocational education team. With the process of globalization China’s education system also needs to cultivate teachers with international vision and competitiveness. So the Ministry of Education issued the “Guiding Opinions on Promoting the Internationalization of Teacher Training” in 2024 to improve teachers’ international vision and cross-cultural communication skills. Therefore, in 2024, the Ministry of Education issued the “Guidelines on Promoting the Internationalization of Teacher Training” in order to enhance teachers’ international outlook and cross-cultural communication skills; to promote China’s education reform and innovation by drawing on advanced international education concepts and methods; and to cultivate a group of high-quality teachers and education administrators with international competitiveness. In 2025 the Ministry of Education issued the “Notice on Promoting the Construction of Teacher Training Resource Sharing Platform” to solve the problem of uneven distribution of resources for teacher training, as high-quality resources are mainly concentrated in developed regions and key schools, the resources in rural and remote areas are scarce.

The second point is connected with the gradual improvement of the teacher training system. At present, teacher training in China is mainly based on a hierarchical and categorized system, with the hierarchy based on the different stages of teacher training, such as new teacher training, backbone teacher training and head teacher training. The training of new teachers focuses on the combination of teaching theory and practice and the training of teaching skills; on the development of teaching innovation and scientific research ability; and on the development of educational management ability.

The third point speaks in favor of rich and diverse content. The content of the training program must accurately focus on the professional growth needs of teachers, go not only in line with the basic orientation of the teacher training program, but also must fully take into account the actual challenges faced by participating teachers and the goals of personal career development [1]. Therefore, the content of teacher training includes first of all teacher ethics. Technology training is an important issue too. The “Education Informatization 2.0 Action Plan” issued by the Ministry of Education of the People’s Republic of China in 2018 aims to promote the comprehensive transformation and upgrading of education informatization. It trains teachers in the combination of online and offline teaching methods, increases the effectiveness of teaching and learning, improves the informationization literacy of teachers, and updates the subject-specific professional knowledge.

The fourth point deals with the gradual improvement of evaluation and feedback mechanisms. Evaluation occupies an important position in the practice of teacher

training, which is not only an important indicator of the effectiveness of training, but also a key driving force to promote the professional growth of teachers and improve the quality of teaching. The essence of teacher training evaluation lies in the comprehensive and in-depth examination of teachers' performance in actual teaching after receiving training and combining theoretical knowledge with practice [2].

The fifth point of the current state of teacher training is connected with the integration of resources. China's current integration of teacher training resources is being promoted mainly through a variety of means, including policy guidance, platform construction, regional collaboration and social participation, with the aim of breaking down resource barriers and achieving the sharing and optimal allocation of high-quality educational resources.

The sixth feature in the Chinese teacher training experience is the choice of its object. As China enters a new era, social contradictions are becoming more and more obvious. In terms of basic education, China emphasizes the cultivation of high-quality talents to meet the needs of national development, and teacher training is an effective way to improve the quality of teachers. At present, the state attaches great importance to the implementation of teacher training, and the scope of the implementation of the training object as a whole presents the characteristics of nationwide coverage. The document "Opinions on Vigorously Strengthening the Training of Primary and Secondary School Teachers" (2011) clearly states that, in the current educational situation, the training of primary and secondary school teachers should be vigorously promoted, especially in terms of upgrading their professional skills, and more attention should be paid to the construction of teacher ethics, and emphasis should be placed on strengthening the cultivation of rural teachers and on the development of primary and secondary school teachers [3], the "Action Plan for the Revitalization of Teacher Education" (2018–2022) jointly issued by the Ministry of Education and other five departments once again emphasizes the training of all rural teachers [4]. The national training program introduced in 2021 put forward the requirement for training and improving the whole staff.

China pays great attention to the problem of internationalization and lifelong learning. The State has adopted a policy document (Opinions on Comprehensively Deepening the Reform of Teacher Construction in the New Era), which clearly states that international exchanges and cooperation among teachers should be strengthened, and that teachers' internationalization should be enhanced. China has borrowed international advanced education concepts, such as inclusive education and STEAM education and has put them into the practice of teacher training; has enhanced the internationalization

of teachers' curricula, carrying out the teaching methods of the three major international curricula: IB, AP and A-level, and has promoted the internationalization of the curricula taught by teachers.

**Conclusion.** Teacher training in China has developed from the ancient apprenticeship system to the modern systematic training and has gone through many changes and innovations, gradually forming a complete system in which state teacher training and private teacher training complement each other. Currently, teacher training is moving towards high quality, digitalization and internationalization under the guidance of policies. Through a tiered and classified training system, rich and varied training contents, a gradually improved evaluation mechanism, and effective integration of resources, teacher training not only improves the teachers' professionalism and teaching ability, but also promotes the development of educational equity and modernization of education. The new requirements put forward by the majority of teachers, are aimed at strengthening the construction of the teaching force, which will have ideal beliefs, moral character, solid knowledge and a heart of love. In the future, with the deepening trend of globalization of education and the wide application of digital technology, teacher training will continue to optimize the allocation of resources, strengthen international exchanges and cooperation, and build a lifelong learning system, so as to provide a solid guarantee for the cultivation of high-quality teachers and the realization of high-quality development of education. As an important pillar of education, teacher training will continue to play a key role in the context of a new era, injecting a steady stream of momentum into national development and social progress.

### Literature

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