

Analysis on the Problems and Countermeasures of the Professional Development of College Counselors

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Abstract: The team of college counselors is an important component of the framework of China's higher education system. In order to enhance the professional identity of college counselors, overcome the dilemma of unclear career positioning and future development, and explore a better path to achieve their professional development, the management team should do a good job in checking the selection and employment of counselors, optimize their onboarding training mode, clarify the boundaries of job responsibilities, and strengthen professional psychological identity. At the same time, counselors should also improve their professional abilities and knowledge level, and better engage in moral education work. This article proposes countermeasures and suggestions for the professional development of counselors, in order to provide reference for their professional development.

Keywords: College counselors, Specialized, Development dilemma, Coping strategies.

1. Introduction

After the founding of the People's Republic of China, the role of college counselors in China has been constantly evolving. With the introduction of a series of documents such as the "Opinions on Further Strengthening and Improving the Ideological and Political Education of College Students" (2004), the "Opinions on Strengthening and Improving the Construction of the Team of College Counselors and Class Teachers in Higher Education Institutions" (2005), and the "Regulations on the Construction of the Team of Counselors in Ordinary Higher Education Institutions" (2006), counselors should not only possess political literacy. In addition to providing ideological and political education and daily management to students, it is also necessary to have professional and professional qualities in order to better manage student affairs, carry out Party and Youth League building activities, pay attention to students' mental health, and serve the student community. In recent years, the Party and the state have attached great importance to the ideological and political education work in universities, and by strengthening the construction of the ideological and political education team and promoting the professionalization of the ideological and political education team, the fundamental task of cultivating morality and cultivating talents has been implemented. In 2014, the Ministry of Education issued the "Vocational Ability Standards for Counselors in Higher Education Institutions (Provisional)", which specifically clarifies the normative requirements and operational norms for the development of counselors through occupational classification and functional differentiation (i.e., professional differentiation), bringing the professional development of counselors into a substantive stage of standardization, scientificization, and institutionalization. The "Regulations on the Construction of Counselor Teams in Ordinary Higher Education Institutions" [2017 (No. 43)] clearly states the need for overall planning and overall arrangement of counselor team construction. 2020 Ministry of Education The Opinions on Accelerating the Construction of the Ideological and Political Work System in Colleges and Universities clearly point out the need to build a high-quality ideological and

political work team, continuously improve the quality, ability, and professional level of the ideological and political work team. However, in reality, due to low social recognition of the counselor profession, numerous student related affairs, and unclear development goals of counselors, there are several obstacles to the professional development of counselors.

2. Defining the Concept of Professional Counselors

With the help of sociologists Carl Sanders and Wilson's definition of the concept of "profession" with the keywords "specialized technology" and "specialized services", the professionalization of counselors can be defined as a dynamic process of continuously improving professional literacy and professional abilities in the process of engaging in this profession. The stronger the ability, the higher the degree of professional development[1].

There are three specific meanings of specialization: first, having professional background, based on Marxist theory, ideological and political education, psychology and other theories, taking professional knowledge and ability required by counselors as the main teaching content, and receiving long-term, specialized learning and practical training; The second is to have professional abilities, such as analyzing the international and domestic macro situation, interpreting the Party and national policies, undertaking the teaching tasks of ideological and political theory courses and philosophy and social sciences courses, keenly observing students' ideological and behavioral characteristics, applying professional knowledge to carry out student education management and guidance, organizing and coordinating students to carry out various educational activities, etc; The third is to adhere to professional ethics, including a clear political stance, firm professional loyalty, continuous pursuit and exploration of work goals, a high sense of responsibility and political mission towards students and work, and conscious adherence to professional ethics and codes of conduct.

3. Analysis of the Dilemmas in the Professional Development of Counselors

The fundamental difficulties in the professional development of college counselors in China are the lack of unified professional knowledge system and the complexity of daily routine work, which are manifested in the following four aspects.

3.1. The occupational admission mechanism is not strict

Schools need to improve the industry recruitment mechanism, attach importance to job selection work, and strengthen professional requirements for positions. Universities shoulder the important task of cultivating moral character in China, and counselors are an important force in the work of cultivating moral character in universities. Therefore, universities should strengthen the requirements related to the professional background of counselors and comprehensively evaluate their comprehensive qualities. We should focus on selecting instructors from personnel with professional backgrounds in ideological and political education, psychology, law and other fields, take into account their knowledge reserves, moral cultivation, relevant work experience and other elements, strictly follow the instructions of the Opinions on Accelerating the Construction of the Ideological and Political Work System in Colleges and Universities, strengthen the selection and allocation of instructors in accordance with the principle of combining full-time and part-time work and focusing on professional work, and earnestly fulfill the main responsibility of the selection and employment of instructors, Control the selection and employment of counselors. In response to the current situation of inconsistent professional backgrounds when selecting college counselors, it is recommended to compensate through personnel training and pre job training to ensure that counselors have a certain level of basic professional literacy and knowledge, laying the foundation for their professional development.

3.2. Uneven professional knowledge system

For in-service counselors, it is necessary to improve their professional knowledge reserves. Firstly, we need to optimize the onboarding training model. Short term 'pre job training' is like skimming on water, comprehensive but not deep enough. Even for counselors with relevant professional backgrounds, they may not necessarily have a comprehensive grasp of the knowledge required for the counselor's profession. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct systematic training on relevant knowledge before starting work. It not only helps counselors develop a systematic understanding of their job responsibilities before taking up their positions, facilitating quick adaptation to job responsibilities, but also helps counselors plan for future personal professional development.

Secondly, it is necessary to explore and try long-term training models. Establish a growth profile for on-the-job counselors, and conduct phased training based on their years of service and work progress; Develop standards for the professionalization of counselors, conduct regular assessments and evaluations based on their growth, and ensure the continuous improvement and professional development of counselors' professional skills. Related research has shown that when working for 1-5 years,

counselors may experience fatigue, and upon reflection, they believe that their profession does not match that of a counselor, leading to individual counselors moving out of the system; When working for 6-10 years, this kind of fatigue will recur and further strengthen; 11-15 years is a bottleneck for the career development of counselors. Schools can provide targeted training based on different years of work: for example, working for 1-5 years can focus on strengthening professional theory and cognition, providing motivation for their professional development; A counselor who has worked for 6-10 years can guide them to combine their work experience and study a certain field of student work, in preparation for becoming an expert counselor; Counselors who have worked for more than 10 years can focus on communication and learning with other universities, and guide the first two types of counselors towards professional development. This time-phased training helps counselors reflect on themselves in practical work, compensate for career weaknesses, increase opportunities for professional development, and help counselors clarify their long-term career plans, laying the foundation for enhancing their professional psychological identity.

Once again, it is important to consider individual personalized needs. Different counselors have different career plans for themselves. Vocational training ensures that counselors have basic professional knowledge after taking up their positions. Long term training creates a continuous learning space for counselors' professional development. Considering the personalized development needs of counselors, there is a targeted approach to cultivating counselors, combining their inherent expertise and personal growth intentions to tap into their individual potential, Enhance the rate of professional growth of counselors.

3.3. Unclear boundaries of job responsibilities

In the development process of universities, it is easy to attach importance to subject construction and scientific research, neglect student management work, and tend to lean towards the misconception of "students only need to ensure personal safety", thus neglecting the important role of counselors in the construction of counselor teams and their ideological guidance for students, leading to the gradual marginalization of counselors[2]. In addition, other departments in the school have inaccurate career positioning for counselors, making their work low-end and concise. They believe that the counselor position is a specialized window for connecting with student related affairs, and functional departments habitually entrust the work of students to counselors for implementation. Party building work, financial payment, academic examination, logistics and security will all prioritize direct communication with counselors. Schools should attach importance to the role of counselors in guiding students' thinking and helping them transition from being the processor of student affairs to being the leader of student thinking and the manager of student affairs. Each department of the school should also fully utilize scientific management procedures, make good use of computer intelligent service platforms, optimize work processes, facilitate students to "reduce burden" for counselors, and increase the possibility of counselors' self-improvement.

3.4. Inadequate professional psychological identification

The lack of professional knowledge and broad job

responsibilities of counselors are indirect reasons for their lack of professional identity. Lack of professional identity is an important factor affecting individual professional development, mainly manifested in two main aspects: inadequate identification with the current profession and unclear planning for future career development. Firstly, as the main force of ideological and political work, counselors often hold multiple positions and tasks. Therefore, many people, and even college counselors themselves, easily identify the profession of "counselor" as a "safety officer" who does not cause safety accidents, a "salesperson" who summarizes various forms, and a "nanny and butler" who manages students' daily lives. This profession does not require too much professional knowledge and skills, and anyone can engage in it. Furthermore, keywords such as "ideological guidance", "growth mentor", and "close friends" in the career development of counselors were overlooked. Secondly, the job responsibilities of counselors are diverse and trivial, such as class management, emergency response, psychological counseling, student affairs management, etc. These tasks require a lot of effort and pressure, but there is currently no unified standard for quantification, and the professional status and salary of counselors are not high [3]. This "income and expenditure imbalance" state can easily lead to a significant psychological gap between counselors' career aspirations and their actual work. Therefore, few counselors consider this profession as a long-term or lifelong career. Once a counselor transfers or abandons the profession midway, their professional development will lose time guarantee and be interrupted.

4. Effective Strategies for the Professional Development of Counselors

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4.4. Strengthen professional psychological identity

Firstly, the government should strengthen the construction and financial investment in the ideological and political work of college students. The central government clearly requires the establishment and improvement of incentive and guarantee mechanisms for the ideological and political team in universities, the improvement of the professional development system for full-time counselors in universities, the support of the "dual line" promotion method, and the establishment of special funds for the construction of the ideological and political bureau work team in each university according to the standard of no less than 20 yuan per year for the total number of students on campus^[5]. The government should effectively ensure the investment of finance at all levels in universities, avoid some universities from compressing the number of counselors due to insufficient funding, and reduce the funding for counselor training. Provide material and spiritual incentives to counselors from various perspectives, including job promotion, title evaluation, and salary level, to enhance professional identity, enhance professional self-esteem, and ensure that they can work with peace of mind. Secondly, schools should actively attach importance to the development of counselors. Firstly, it is necessary to improve the relevant evaluation mechanism, formulate scientific evaluation standards based on the particularity of the counselor position, and ensure the scientific and standardized performance evaluation. Secondly, it is necessary to improve the salary incentive mechanism, which should combine factors such as the length of service, workload, and number of shifts of counselors, to achieve a differentiated salary mechanism of more work, better work, and better pay; According to the instructions of the "Opinions on Accelerating the Construction of the Ideological and Political Work System in Universities", counselor subsidies should be set up according to local conditions, the total amount of school and school work should be increased, and the work motivation of counselors should be increased. Once

again, schools should conscientiously implement Order No. 24 of the Ministry of Education to ensure the development, promotion, and optimization of the counselor team.

Thirdly, individuals should maintain a positive attitude, self motivate, and continuously improve. Firstly, it is necessary to establish a correct professional outlook and make students' growth and success convincing. Firstly, it is necessary to establish a correct professional outlook and make serving the growth and success of students a spiritual pursuit for oneself in this profession, rather than treating the position of counselor as a shortcut for job transfer, promotion, or household registration. Secondly, we must adhere to lifelong learning, continuously strengthen our ideological and political theoretical qualities, enhance professional abilities, and expand our knowledge reserves. We not only need to provide students with ideological guidance, employment and entrepreneurship guidance, psychological counseling, and other services, but also scientifically evaluate ourselves, plan a career development path, and achieve life value while educating people. Once again, it is necessary to do a good job in psychological construction, manage emotions well, continuously inject positive energy into oneself, and invest in the work with a confident, optimistic, positive attitude and a strong sense of identification with one's own profession, facing difficulties and opening up new situations.

5. Conclusion

Ideological and political counselors are the main force of ideological and political education work in universities, and are important contributors to moral education and talent cultivation. Their stable and long-term career development helps students grow and become successful. Improving their career admission mechanism and raising their career starting point are the foundation for their stable and long-term career development; Improving the knowledge system, deepening their business level and knowledge reserves, and breaking the "ceiling" of career development are essential elements for their long-term career development; Clarifying the boundaries of job responsibilities, with more professionalism and less interference, is a booster for their career progress and development; Strengthening professional psychological identity, opening up career development channels, and paying attention to the actual needs of frontline student workers are the fundamental guarantees for their long-term career stability.

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