

Research on “Internet+” Secondary School English Teachers’ Professional Development Strategy Based on SWOT Analysis

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Abstract

In the era of “Internet +”, the rapid development of information technology has also promoted the continuous innovation in the field of education. In recent years, scholars have begun to pay attention to the use of the Internet to promote teacher professional development, which provides a new path for teacher professional development, but at the same time, secondary school English teachers also face new challenges. Therefore, through SWOT analysis, this paper accurately grasps the strengths and weaknesses then provides relevant strategies for the professional development of English teachers based on opportunities and challenges of “Internet+” secondary school English teachers’ professional development.

Keywords: “Internet+”, teacher professional development, SWOT analysis

1. Introduction

In 2018, the CPC Central Committee and the State Council issued *The Opinions on Comprehensively Deepening the Reform of the Construction of the Teacher Team in the New Era*. It emphasizes that hundred years’ policy based on education, while the education policy based on teachers. By 2035, the comprehensive quality, professional level and innovation ability of teachers will be greatly improved. (The Ministry of Education of the People’s Republic of China, 2021) Improving the professional level of teachers means that teachers should continue to learn, keep pace with the times, enrich their professional knowledge, update their concepts, change their methods, and improve their ability to practice education and teaching. With the

development of a new generation of information technology, new models of “Internet +” teacher professional development such as online training, blended training, online teaching and research, and blended teaching and research are being actively explored around the world. (Feng, X.Y., He, C., Song, J.X. & Sun, H.T., 2022) *The Vision Statement on Educational Change*, released in 2022, also points to the need to use the digital revolution to help public education, emphasizes the role of teachers as a key pillar in this change system, and proposes to transform teachers themselves into agents of change. (United Nations, 2022) This paper focuses on teacher professional development, and aims to explore how secondary school English teachers can grasp the opportunities and challenges brought

by the change under the Internet technology, so that the Internet can better serve their professional development.

2. Forms of “Internet+” Teacher Professional Development

Teacher professional development emphasizes that teaching is a specialized profession, that teachers are professionals who perform educational and teaching work, and that teachers are subject to long-term training, specific rules of conduct and a high degree of autonomy. It refers to the process of improving the professionalism of teachers and improving their professional quality. (Xiao, L.P., 2002) Therefore, the professional development of teachers is the process of continuous development and progress of individual teachers’ profession, and the continuous development and improvement of teachers’ individual professional knowledge, professional skills and professional qualities. At present, Internet technology brings teachers professional development not only the support of technology, tools and resources in some links, but also brings new environments and models. Therefore, the key connotation of “Internet+” teacher professional development is not the “technical enhancement” of teacher professional development, but the innovation and reshaping of teachers’ professional development methods in the new Internet technology environment. The practice of “Internet+” teachers’ professional development is diversified and decentralized. At present, it mainly includes two categories: formal learning and informal learning for teachers. Formal learning modes for teachers include online teacher training programs, blended teacher training programs, and teacher professional development MOOCs; Teachers’ informal learning modes include: online teaching and research, blended teaching and research, informal learning based on online video resources, and online teacher practice community. (Feng, X.Y., He, C., Song, J.X. & Sun, H.T., 2022)

3. SWOT Analysis of “Internet+” Teacher Professional Development

SWOT analysis, also known as situation analysis, is a comprehensive analysis method with significant structural and systematic characteristics. Among them, “S” refers to the intrinsic advantages of “Internet +” teachers’ professional development; “W” refers to the

potential disadvantages of “Internet+” teachers’ professional development; “O” refers to the external opportunities for “Internet+” teachers’ professional development; “T” refers to the external threats or practical challenges that “Internet+” teachers’ professional development may encounter. Through the SWOT analysis of “Internet+” teachers’ professional development, this paper aims to summarize the strategies to effectively promote teachers’ professional development under the current “Internet+” background.

3.1 Internal Strengths

Firstly, Internet platforms break through the limitations of time and space. (Liang, Y., 2017) From the perspective of time, traditional offline English teacher education requires teachers to dedicate time to intensive training. This method brings great inconvenience to teachers’ daily teaching activities. Secondary school English teachers, especially high school English teachers, have heavy teaching tasks, and it is difficult to coordinate time for unified training. However, online learning in the form of online courses or online projects that support teachers to complete within a specified time or cycle provides flexible learning time for teachers’ training. From the perspective of space, teachers can participate in such online learning courses at home or at school, breaking through geographical limitations. It is easier for English teachers to reach native English speakers and learn their effective teaching methods.

Secondly, Internet platforms provide a wealth and variety of learning resources. Traditional teacher education resources mainly come from books, offline lectures, face-to-face guidance from colleagues or experts, etc. The source channel is single, and the knowledge and information obtained by teachers are very limited. In the Internet era, online learning platforms provide rich learning resources. For example, a type of MOOC curriculum that serves teacher professional development is of great significance for large-scale teacher learning and promoting balanced education. Another important resource is the English High-quality Course. Whether it is for pre-service teachers or in-service teachers, observing and learning high-quality courses is an effective way to quickly improve the teaching level of teachers. In addition, English teachers can interact with native English speakers online and develop intercultural communication skills.

Thirdly, the Internet platform promotes the formation of an online teacher community. The online teacher community effectively solves the problem of lack of communication mechanisms and mutual aid groups in traditional teacher education. Online communication is based on the support of modern information technology, not limited by time and space. All kinds of teachers, administrators and researchers at all levels cross the boundaries of geography and identity, interact and reflect on cooperation in the online learning community or virtual learning community of teachers, and form a good interactive relationship, thereby breaking the closed nature of traditional teacher professional training and promoting the professional development of teachers.

3.2 Internal Weaknesses

Firstly, some teachers' perceptions have not changed. Some older junior high school English teachers do not have a strong sense of professional development and are reluctant to learn online technology due to limited energy, and some English teachers prefer to teach based on their years of teaching experience. This also makes teachers reluctant to participate in formal or informal online teaching and research, MOOCs courses, etc.

Secondly, the sharing of online resources may lead to the loss of teachers' own teaching personality. In the context of resource sharing in the "Internet +" era, teachers can not only refer to the cases shared by excellent teachers, but also independently share their own design of teaching plans or courseware. However, one of the negative effects of resource sharing is that it may lead to the homogenization of network resources, and teachers at all levels in various places may directly cite them without modification. Teachers lose the ability to think and research for themselves, and only act as transmitters of information technology, resulting in the loss of individualization and creativity of teachers.

3.3 External Opportunities

Firstly, "Internet+" teacher professional development can promote the transformation of teachers in the digital age. The "Internet+" teacher professional development project can effectively promote the professional development of teachers. A considerable number of studies have proved that online training and blended training can more effectively promote

teachers' professional development and improve teachers' teaching practice ability and self-efficacy compared with face-to-face training (Binmohsen & Abrahams, 2020). Studies have shown that "Internet+" teacher professional development models such as online training and blended training can help develop the high-level teaching practice ability of secondary school English teachers to adapt to future education. For example, it is helpful to improve teachers' information teaching ability and blended teaching ability (Beilstein et al., 2021).

Secondly, strong support from government policies. The *Action Plan for Education Informatization 2.0* issued in 2018 mentions that "through demonstration training projects, all localities will be led to carry out teacher informatization training according to local conditions". (The Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2020) The Ministry of Education has successively issued a series of policy measures such as the pilot of artificial intelligence to promote the construction of teachers, the pilot of virtual teaching and research department construction, the MOOC West Action Plan 2.0, and the national online training for teachers. "Internet +" teacher professional development has become an important proposition for the construction of teachers in the new era. (Jiang, C.W., 2019)

3.4 External Challenges

First, the "Internet +" teacher professional development puts forward higher requirements for teachers' information literacy. Secondary English teachers have a heavy teaching task, and most teachers lack practical actions to improve their own information literacy. Formal learning or informal learning of teachers requires teachers to be able to flexibly apply various educational information technologies, but due to the relatively late implementation of education informatization reform in China, some teachers, especially older teachers and teachers in remote rural areas, lack certain knowledge of educational information technology, which brings certain challenges to the professional development of "Internet +" teachers.

Secondly, formalism has sprouted in the context of 'Internet+' teacher professional development. While the Internet has broken the limits of time and space, it has also led some teachers to take a formalistic approach to their training. For example, some teachers take MOOC courses in

accordance with the learning requirements, but do not actually study the courses seriously, instead completing them perfunctorily as if they were tasks. They take the courses simply to gain some training experience, rather than to improve their professional knowledge and skills from the bottom of their hearts. The convenience of the Internet also makes it difficult for educational leaders to monitor the professional development of individual teachers, and therefore to effectively assess the quality of the professional development of Internet-plus teachers. Therefore, in the context of the Internet, it is important to pay attention to the development of teachers' awareness of their own development.

4. Strategies

Based on the systematic analysis of the internal and external environment of "Internet+" teachers' professional development, the author combines internal advantages and external opportunities, analyzes potential weaknesses and actual threats, and proposes the following strategies to promote the professional development of secondary English teachers.

(1) Develop a modern and informative learning philosophy for secondary school English teachers. The process of teacher professional development should not be a passive process of knowledge consumption, but an active process of knowledge generation. (Gu, X.Q., 2005) Teacher professional development should be adaptive, which means that it enables teachers to adapt to the requirements of the development of the times and the purposes of education. (Li, Q.X. & Liang, Z., 2022) The new era requires that teachers should actively participate in formal or informal web-based teacher professional development projects. For secondary school English teachers, teachers should take the initiative to learn about information technology, grasp the characteristics of students' English learning in the context of the Internet, and make full use of the various English learning resources available in the context of the Internet for teaching. Therefore, "Internet+" teacher professional development as a new model requires teachers to have a modern and informative learning philosophy. Teachers should understand that professional learning includes not only systematic formal learning, but also informal learning throughout their teaching careers, so that they understand that learning is a process of active participation,

active inquiry and the construction of their own understanding.

(2) Strengthening the information literacy of secondary school English teachers. First, schools should provide technical support service teams for teachers, develop corresponding service policies, solve teachers' problems in a timely manner, and provide a full range of technical support services for secondary school teachers to improve their information literacy skills and promote campus informatization construction. Second, schools should regularly organize English teachers to attend information technology training to improve their information technology operation ability. In addition, schools can also hold relevant information technology English teaching skills competitions to promote teaching and improve secondary school English teachers' information literacy. Third, the education department should also improve the digital resource management service platform to achieve intelligent selection and precise pushing of high-quality resources. (Yang, H.R., Ma, M.Y., Xiang, Q.C., Liu, Q.T., Bai, X.Y. & Cai, M.H., 2022) Digitalization promotes the transformation and innovation of training methods and talent training methods, and motivates teachers to actively improve their information literacy. In conclusion, through information technology, teachers are able to present and integrate teaching contents in various forms such as text, sound, images, and animations to achieve an effective combination of teaching contents and teaching resources (Su, H. & Wang, Q.Y., 2022), thus enhancing teachers' sense of teaching accomplishment. This result-oriented and goal-driven approach in turn can continuously promote the improvement of teachers' information literacy.

(3) Improve the quality of teachers' online learning resources. On the one hand, the training experts of teachers' online learning should not only have certain professional knowledge and teaching practice experience, but also have certain professional qualities, infiltrate humanistic care in teachers' online learning, give emotional support to teachers as learners, and provide teachers with high-quality and sustainable online learning services. On the other hand, the design of online learning for teachers should be based on providing high-quality resources required for teachers' professional development, and on the premise of analyzing the learning characteristics and

learning needs of training teachers, through the collaborative cooperation of subject experts and educational technology experts, jointly develop teachers' online learning project resources and design learning courses, optimize the content of teachers' online learning resources, enrich the form of online learning resources, and improve the effect of teachers' online learning.

(4) Establish a digital monitoring mechanism to ensure the quality of teachers' professional development. In the organization and implementation of teacher professional development programs, quality monitoring is of great significance to ensure the effectiveness of the program and further improve the quality of the project. (The Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2022) With the advent of the "Internet+" era, big data technology provides a new development direction for the monitoring of the quality of teachers' professional development. The first is to strengthen the monitoring of the training process. In the era of big data, each teacher's various learning activities when participating in training activities will leave data on various terminals. Collecting and aggregating this data in large quantities allows real-time monitoring of teacher participation in training. The second is to track the effectiveness of training for a long time. (Zhang, H.Y., 2018) By analyzing the changes in teachers' behavior before and after training, supplemented by the key event method, such as inviting teachers to regularly write and submit typical cases that can reflect the training results on the data platform, it can be used as an objective basis to capture the improvement of teachers' behavior. The third is to integrate multi-channel data. Through the data platform, multiple evaluation subjects composed of external experts, education administrators, professional institutions and employers, colleges and universities, etc. can be integrated, and through the data monitoring before, during and after teacher training, the path of continuous improvement and quality improvement of teacher professional development activities can be sought.

5. Conclusion

This paper applies the SWOT analysis to explore the internal advantages and disadvantages, external opportunities and challenges of "Internet+" teachers' professional development, and summarizes four coping strategies in response to the above analysis. First, to cultivate

secondary English teachers' modern and informative learning concepts; second, to enhance secondary English teachers' information literacy; third, to improve the quality of teachers' online learning resources; and fourth, to strengthen the assessment system of secondary English teachers' online professional development. In conclusion, relevant studies have shown that "Internet+" teacher professional development programs can effectively promote teachers' professional development and enhance the effectiveness of teachers' professional development. Therefore, for secondary school English teachers, it is more important to continuously learn new theories and teaching methods, improve their teaching ability, adapt to the requirements of teachers in the new era, and comprehensively promote the integration and innovative development of information-based education and teaching. (Xu, Z.T., 2021) In addition, this study is mainly based on literature analysis and discussion, and there are some limitations because it failed to carry out empirical research under the limited time and other conditions, so the subsequent research on "Internet+" secondary school English teachers' professional development can also be studied from the empirical perspective.

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