

A training course for Guizhou teachers for the establishment of school libraries – experience sharing

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In the past two decades, under the economic reform, in The Mainland China, the annual economic growth(GDP) is more than 10%, but in general ,in the western part of China most of the people are lived in poverty and uneducated. As a result, there are lots voluntary and charitable agencies in Hong Kong which help the Chinese people to get rib of poverty and let the kids in the villages receive education. They support the rural area to build schools and set up school libraries in order to enhance the educational standard in the rural area. In December, 2006, the Hong Kong Teacher-librarians' Association was invited by the JIAN XING CHARITABLE FOUNDATION LIMITED, one of the charitable agencies to organise a four and a half days training course for the school teachers in Guizhou province, who will be responsible for the operation of the school libraries in future. With the help of the Jiangsu provinces Mr. Cheung Jing Wo, the course was successfully helded in Jin Sha of the Guizhou province.,

Why there is the training course in Guizhou Province?

The JIAN XING CHARITABLE FOUNDATION LIMITED, one of the charitable agencies in Hong Kong was established by a group of sincere and kind-hearted doctors namely with the head of Dr. Tsui Yip Shing since the 1990s. The limited had contributed a lot of money in setting up schools in the under-developed provinces in China especially in Guizhou Province. Besides, Dr. Tsui had contributed huge amount in setting up school libraries there since 1999. However, the Chinese teachers do not believe the importance of the school libraries, even Dr. Tsui had paid a lot of money for them to set up the school libraries for years. The resources can hardly go into the hands of the students. As a result, Dr. Tsui had invited a group of students of the Guizhou Normal University in Guiyang to conduct a comprehensive survey on the school libraries in Jinsha so as to get a general understanding on them. After that, Dr. Tsui would like to contribute the funding to those needed schools to set up libraries. Dr. Tsui was surprised to know that there were not any teachers who had received a basic training on the operating of a school library. He believes that they need a training course provided before the setting up of a library in every school.

The Guizhou Province

Guizhou province known for short as Qian, is situated at southwest of China. It has an area of 170 thousand square kilometers and a population of 33 million. Guizhou, isolated from the rest of the world for centuries by its mountainous terrain, remains one of China's most unspoiled provinces. In the western part of China like the Guizhou province, it is still

the poorest provinces. It is underdeveloped, and most of the people are peasants, the average yearly income is only ¥1854 (US \$ 237.7) In order not to make the Guizhou people fall behind from the booming economy of China. Education is the only way for poor people to learn about the outside world. When they are being educated, they can climb up the social ladder so as to get rid of poverty. The setting up of school libraries will further strengthen the mind of the people and broaden their outlook. When Dr. Tsui came back to Hong Kong, he immediately approaches the Hong Kong Teacher-Librarians' Association (HKTLA) and invites the Association to run a basic training for the teachers in Guizhou. In this way, the library materials can be fully utilized in future.

The invitation

Once the HKTLA had received the invitation from the JIAN XING CHARITABLE FOUNDATION LIMITED in September 2006, the committee members tried to discuss this matter during the committee meeting, they all believed that this task could not be done solely by one or two members. All agreed that there should be a joint effort through the team work. Dr. Tsui was very admired by the determination made by the HKTLA, immediately; he tried to approach the Jin Sha Education Department and persuaded them to release more teachers to take part in the training course.

On the other hand, in the follow up committee meeting, the HKTLA realized that the education background and the daily routine work between Hong Kong and China was slightly different with each other. In fact, the school librarians in Hong Kong mainly adopted the library system from the western countries namely the United States of America. However, in Mainland China, the school libraries had their own system. As a result, the HKTLA finally remembered that there was an old friend Mr. Cheung Jing Wo, who was the committee member of the School Librarian Association in Jiangsu province. When Mr. Cheung knew this, he was so generous that he immediately agreed to join with the HKTLA, and he had asked the School Librarian Association in Jiangsu province donated a lot of useful teaching materials for the training course.

With the help of the Internet, all communications between Hong Kong and China were fulfilled. The teaching notes were sent to Jin Sha on December, 2006, and it was printed out for the teachers. Finally, the training course was held on the 25th December to the 29th December, 2006 in the Jin Sha Teacher Training Schools. Altogether, there were 104 teachers participated in the course; the time table of the course was listed as the following:

The Hong Kong Teacher-Librarians' Association &
The School Librarian Association of the Jiangsu provinces
Schedule for the Teacher Librarian in Jin Sha, Guizhou province

From 25th to 29th December, 2006

| Time | | Content | | Content of the course | Person in charge |
|----------------|----|----------------|---------|---|---|
| | | Time | Content | | |
| 25/12 (Mon) | AM | 8:00~ 9:00 | | Report to the course & opening ceremony | Official of the local education department Mr. Luk Hok Hei, Mr. Cheung Jing Wo, & Dr. Tsui Yip Shing |
| | | 9:00~ 10:30 | | Social changes that affect the role of the school librarian | Mr. Luk Hok Hei, |

| | | | | |
|----------------|---------|---------------------|--|--|
| | | 10:30 ~ 11:30 | Book selection & collection development | Ms. Betty Chu |
| | PM | 1:30~ 5:00 | Education reform affect the library collection in China | Mr. Cheung Jing Wo |
| 26/12 (Tue) | AM | 8:00~ 11:30 | Introduction on the use of Classification System used in China | Mr. Cheung Jing Wo |
| | PM | 1:30~ 2:45 | The setting up of school library (furniture and equipment) | Mr. Luk Hok Hei, |
| | | 3:00~ 5:00 | Collaborative Planning & Teaching | Ms Angel Leung Ms Dawn Ho |
| 27/12 (Wed) | AM | 8:00~ 11:30 | Classification Scheme | Mr. Cheung Jing Wo |
| | PM | 1:30~ 2:45 | Building up the web page for the school libraries | Ms Amy Chan |
| | | 3:00~ 5:00 | Promotion of Library Reading Activities | Ms Kan Tsui King |
| 28/12 (Thu) | AM | 8:00~ 9:45 | Training of Librarian Perfect | Mr. Leung Tung Lam |
| | | 10:00 ~ 11:30 | Library Automation and digitalization | Mr. Cheung Jing Wo |
| | PM | 1:30~ 2:45 | Journals & other reading articles in School Libraries | Mr. Cheung Jing Wo |
| | | 3:00~ 5:00 | Open book examination | Jointly organised by HKTLA members & Mr. Cheung Jing Wo |
| | Evening | 7:30~ 10:00 | Social Gathering | Official of the local education department Mr. Luk Hok Hei, Mr. Cheung Jing Wo, & Dr. Tsui Yip Shing |
| 29/12 (Fri) | AM | 8:00~ 9:45 | Sharing of the experience Announcement of the examination result and the presentation of the Certificates Closing Ceremony | The local school teachers |
| | | 10:00 ~ 11:20 | Sharing of the experience Announcement of the examination result and the presentation of the Certificates Closing Ceremony | Official of the local education department Mr. Luk Hok Hei, Mr. Cheung Jing Wo, & Dr. Tsui Yip Shing |
| | PM | | Course dismissed | |

During the training, the HKTLA had conducted a survey on the general condition of the school libraries in Jin Sha. The result is shown as below:

The Difficulties faced by the School Teachers in Operating a School Library in Jin Sha

| Difficulties faced | | No of Cases |
|---|--|--------------------|
| Library | Lack of a regular room for operating a library | 43 |
| | Lack of Space | 7 |
| Funding | Inadequate | 35 |
| | Totally lack of library books | 31 |
| | A little amount of books | 23 |
| Library Books | Lack of variety | |
| | Too old | 6 |
| | Inappropriate | 3 |
| | Unable to return by kids | 2 |
| | Low usage | 1 |
| Library Facilities /Online | Inadequate books | 23 |
| | Lack of book shelf | 6 |
| | Lack of computer | 2 |
| | Lack of online facilities | 3 |
| Professional Training | Teacher totally lacks of professional training on library skills | 21 |
| | Lack of Teachers | 9 |
| Work Load | Too heavy | 8 |
| | Only part-time library staff | 6 |
| | Government officials /School head do not respect the library work | 12 |
| | Other teachers | 6 |
| Respectability | Parents | 4 |
| | Students | 1 |
| | Teachers worked for library were not respected | 1 |
| Students' Attitude towards library | Only care for teaching material | 5 |
| | Lack of interest in reading | 3 |
| | Lack of time in reading | 3 |
| | Had not develop reading as a habit | 2 |
| | Poor attitude towards library | 4 |
| | Students don't care books | 2 |
| Working Difficulties | Hard to guide the students in reading | 2 |
| | Hard to develop reading | 2 |
| | Do not know how to get the resource | 1 |
| Library training | Lack of skill in classification | 4 |
| | Hard to get the library training course | 3 |
| Others | Teachers only care for superficial work | 3 |
| | Library opening hours is short | 1 |
| | Difficulties in being accepted by Society | 1 |

No of teachers answer the questionnaires : 74

It shown that the development of the school libraries in Jin Sha was very primitive and it was totally far below the Hong Kong standard.

After the training course in Jin Sha, Dr. Tsui invited all the parties involved in the training to meet together so as to encounter the problems and difficulties arisen. Dr. Tsui stated that the local government officials should foster the school heads to develop the school library in both primary and secondary schools. There should be some pilot schools setting up a real library with supporting staffs with appropriated training in library skills. Besides, they should group together and form a teacher librarian association in promoting the professional spirit

In addition, Dr. Tsui suggested that the HKTLA and the School Librarian Association in Jiangsu province should act as consultant to Jin Sha once it was formed. There should be more promotion on the use of school library. The close monitor on the management of the library should be done by the local government. There would be more purchasing of library books in future. As a result, Dr. Tsui had invited the HKTLA to help him to go to China on one of the Sundays in May, 2007 to select library books for Jin Sha Schools. Thus, the poverty problems in Guizhou can be eased in the coming future.

References

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Available Online: 1st May, 2007

JIAN XING CHARITABLE FOUNDATION LIMITED,

www.jianxinghk.com/

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