

Teachers and the Teaching Profession

Teachers' Professional Vulnerability and Cultural Tradition: A Study on Online Discussions



Dr. Gao Xuesong, PhD

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Abstract:

In this presentation, Dr. Gao reports on a study exploring the issue of teachers' professional vulnerability using a range of messages from an online teachers' community on the Chinese mainland. The study reveals how macro changes at policy level impact on teachers' professional relationships and in turn their professional identities in teacher discussants' perceptions. Furthermore, Dr. Gao contends that the Chinese cultural tradition somehow adds to teachers' professional vulnerability. While the tradition used to give teacher authority, it imposes burdens on teachers and subjects them to close scrutiny, which consequently made them feel more vulnerable. The presentation concludes with reflections on its methodology and discusses how a pastime activity has become a serious research opportunity in the case of this study.

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