Journal of Education and Educational Research
ISSN: 2957-9465 | Vol. 10, No. 1, 2024

The Solution to the Conflict Between the Tutor and the Graduate Student, from A New Perspective to Examine the Problem and Countermeasures

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Abstract: At present, the thought of conflict management between tutors and students is mainly limited to how to eliminate conflicts, ignoring the positive functions contained in conflicts. Conflict is the norm of the mentoring relationship. Because of the heterogeneous group between tutors and students, and the unique "skewed structure" of graduate education field, the implicit conflict has become the main form of conflict between tutors and students. The conflict between tutors and students can promote the integration of the mentoring community, which is an indicator of the closeness of the mentoring relationship and plays the "safety valve" function of the mentoring community. At the same time, conflict is also an important way to achieve high-quality knowledge production and moral education. Conflict management between tutors and students should not unilaterally emphasize the elimination of conflicts, but should achieve accurate governance based on the form and function of conflicts between tutors and students. On the basis of eliminating the stereotype of conflicts between mentors and students, explicit positive conflicts should be promoted, explicit negative conflicts should be prevented, and implicit negative conflicts should be monitored.

Keywords: Conflict between Mentor and Students; Mentoring Relationship; Implicit Conflict; Conflict Management.

1. The Manifestation of the Conflict Between the Tutor and the Students

Conflict is a kind of adversarial interaction. This antagonism may stem from differences in interests, ideas, or beliefs. Conflicts can be divided into explicit and implicit conflicts according to their manifestations. Explicit conflict and implicit conflict are the two ends of the conflict form, and the difference between the two mainly lies in whether a direct and open confrontation state or process occurs.

1.1. The Model of Conflict between Tutor and Students

The conflict between tutors and students usually refers to the potential or open rejection and confrontation state and process generated in the interaction process between graduate students and tutors, which is specifically manifested as the opposition in concepts, mutual conflict in emotions, indifference in attitudes, and mutual confrontation in language and behavior. Conflict is a common way of social interaction between tutors and students, and it is a natural asymmetric dynamic relationship between tutors and graduate students [1].

From the perspective of conflict types, it can be roughly divided into behavioral conflict, verbal conflict, and psychological conflict (cognition, attitude and emotion, etc.) [2]. According to the development process of conflict, Stephen Robbins, a famous management master, proposed the five-stage conflict theory, which divided the process of conflict into five stages: potential opposition, cognitive and emotional investment, behavioral intention, behavior and result [3]. Among them, the stage of potential opposition, cognition and emotional investment is often in the recessive stage, while the behavior and result have developed to the explicit stage. The behavioral intention stage is between implicit and explicit conflict. Combined with Robbins's five-stage conflict theory, this paper classifies behavioral and verbal conflicts as explicit conflicts, while psychological conflicts are classified as implicit conflicts according to the manifestations of conflicts.

The implicit conflict of mentors is an indirect and non-public confrontation state generated in the process of interaction between mentors, which is generally manifested in three aspects: concept (cognition), emotion and attitude. In terms of concept, it is mainly manifested in the differences and disagreements of academic views, values, research methods and so on. It should be pointed out that differences in cognition do not mean conflict, only such differences and disagreements in the adversarial state of tension belong to conflict. In terms of emotion, it is mainly manifested as tension, dissatisfaction, opposition, rejection and resistance between the students. In terms of attitude, it is mainly manifested as indifference, disgust, contempt and intentional silence between the students. The conflict between students' ideas, emotions and attitudes is not a linear progression, and can occur at any level. Generally speaking, the difference of concept or cognition is the basis and premise of conflict. Even the conflicts of interest between students and tutors are actually derived from the differences in their cognition of interests.

Conflict between tutor and students is usually manifested in speech and behavior. Among them, verbal conflict is the main type of explicit conflict between students, which is usually manifested as argument, debate, quarrel, blame, criticism and even abuse. Behavioral conflict is relatively rare, and only a very serious confrontational interaction between the students may rise to behavioral conflict, usually showing physical aggression and violence.

There is no clear-cut boundary between implicit conflict and explicit conflict, and the definition standard changes with the change of conflict situation. For example, when there is an adversarial interaction between the supervisor and the graduate student, the graduate student does not explicitly show it, or even though it is revealed, the supervisor as the

other side of the interaction is not aware of it, the conflict is still regarded as an implicit conflict.

1.2. Implicit Conflict as the Norm of Guider Interaction

Due to the indirect and non-public state of mentoring implicit conflict, it is often ignored in the practice of conflict governance between tutors and students, and it also lacks due attention in the research of conflict governance between tutors and students. Although there are a lot of studies on mentoring relationship involving conflict, it usually refers to the conflict in the direct and open confrontation state, and does not include the conflict in the hidden state into the research field. As supervisors and graduate students belong to heterogeneous groups, coupled with the "biased structure" of graduate education field, conflict has become the normal interaction between guide students, and implicit conflict has become the main form of conflict between tutors and students.

1.2.1. Tutors and Students Belong to Heterogeneous Groups

Tutors and students are two different roles in social organizations. As the two sides of interaction, they constitute two heterogeneous groups [4]. There are great differences between tutors and graduate students in terms of social roles, value norms, social status, resources and power. If heterogeneous groups with such large differences want to engage in knowledge production activities together, conflicts are unavoidable. The conflict mentoring relationship is normal, not pathological. Behind the conflict between mentor and students is essentially the conflict between two social groups [5]. As the guardian of academic territory, tutors' guidance to graduate students is essentially a process of academic discipline for academic newcomers by the "knowledge kingdom" represented by tutors. This discipline includes subject knowledge, research methods, academic norms, research paradigms, and academic ethics and morals. As newcomers to the academic field, graduate students constantly acquire the value norms and survival rules of the academic world under the guidance of their tutors in the process of knowledge production.

As the first responsible person for postgraduate training, tutors shoulder the important mission of cultivating morality and cultivating people. This requires tutors to integrate professional education with ideological and political education organically, "to be both academic and life mentors " [6]. As academic tutors, tutors provide academic training for new students on behalf of the academic kingdom. As a life coach, the mentor, as a representative of the country and society, carries out value discipline to the young generation [7]. The conflicts in academic discipline mainly originate from the knowledge production activities themselves, such as the differences between tutors and students in academic views, research methods, and research paradigms. The conflict in the process of value discipline mainly stems from the difference and opposition in value between the tutor and the researcher. With the acceleration of social transformation, the differences in values between the two sides of the students are increasing, the generation gap between the students is also expanding, gradually deepening, and the conflicts are also increasing.

1.2.2. The Biased Structure of Graduate Education Field

In the process of interaction between students and tutors, due to the wide difference in power and status between the two sides, implicit conflict becomes the main form of conflict in the relationship between students and tutors, and overt conflict that breaks out in public is often an extreme case [8]. Tutors and graduate students are the main actors in the field of graduate education. Although supervisors and graduate students are equal in terms of legal status, in fact, "non-equivalence is the realistic expression of the interaction between tutors and students" [9]. The differences in power, authority, culture, economy, and social capital among mentors shape the skewed structural relationship between mentors, resulting in potential structural pressure between tutors and students. The power potential difference between tutors and graduate students restricts the development of the relationship between tutors and graduate students [10].

In the biased structure, the tutor is in the "positive position" and occupies the absolute dominant position, so that the conflict between the tutor and the student is usually hidden under the iceberg, and only when the conflict develops to a considerable degree of intensity, it will be transformed into the explicit conflict above the iceberg. In addition, tutors are the absolutely dominant side in the tutor-student interaction structure and tend to ignore the existence of implicit conflicts, which is also an important reason for the different perception of conflicts between tutors and learners in the interview process in this study. In conflict relationships, mentors are usually the dominant force in the direction of conflict. In addition, with the deepening of the logic of "accountability" in thesis quality assurance, the rights and responsibilities of supervisors have been further expanded, and the "power potential difference" between students and supervisors has also been enlarged [11]. Implicit conflicts are usually very unstable and may escalate into explicit conflicts once they encounter a suitable environment, or they may exist for a period of time and then disappear automatically. It should be pointed out that although recent surveys show that graduate students are more satisfied with the guidance of their supervisors [12], this does not mean that there are no conflicts between tutors and students, let alone that there are no hidden conflicts. Satisfaction is related to the level of expectation. Although conflict and satisfaction are closely related, they belong to different categories.

2. The Analytical Framework for Conflict Governance between Mentors and Students

Considering the form and function of conflict, theoretically, conflict can be divided into four types: explicit positive functional conflict (referred to as "explicit positive conflict "), explicit negative functional conflict (referred to as" explicit negative conflict "), implicit negative functional conflict (referred to as "implicit negative conflict ") and implicit positive functional conflict (referred to as" implicit positive conflict ").

Explicit positive conflict, which belongs to the optimal state of conflict between tutors and students, is also the fundamental goal of conflict governance between tutors and students. In explicit positive conflict, the divergence, tension and confrontation in concepts, emotions and attitudes hidden under the iceberg are transformed into explicit conflict in a benign way, avoiding the destructive impact of conflict. This is the blind spot of current research on conflict governance between tutors and students. How to transform the induced negative conflict into explicit positive conflict, the mechanism and conditions of explicit positive conflict need

to be further studied.

Explicit negative conflict belongs to the worst state of the conflict between the tutor and the trainee. In the explicit negative conflict, the implicit conflict of the guide breaks out in a destructive confrontation way, which often brings great negative effects to the guide. If it is not treated in time, it may cause extreme vicious events. In recent years, conflicts between tutors and students have led to depression and suicide of graduate students. Because the conflict in explicit negative conflict exists in explicit way, it often brings serious consequences once it breaks out, so it is widely concerned. This is also the focus and hot spot of current research on conflict governance between tutors and students.

Implicit negative conflict is the main type of conflict between the tutor and the trainee. Due to the low intensity of the recessive negative conflict, the consequences do not have impact, and the way of conflict is relatively hidden, easy to be ignored, lack of due attention. Although the implicit negative conflict has a low visual intensity, it has a wide influence, which destroys the mentoring relationship and affects the development of graduate students. Conflicts between tutors and graduate students are inevitable, but both sides often "tacitly gloss over peace, and the conflict on the side of graduate students is even more self-suppressing. Many graduate students become increasingly numb and passive in the mentoring interaction, and they build up a wall of self-protection " [13]. Because of its concealment, this kind of conflict is difficult to be perceived by the tutor, so it is difficult to be resolved in time. This is the weak spot in current research on conflict governance between tutors and students.

Implicit positive conflicts, which are usually rare. Implicit positive conflict generally refers to the confrontation state of concepts, emotions or attitudes between the two sides of the conflict, but this confrontation state can bring positive effects to the two or one side of the conflict. For example, in the face of the strict requirements or criticism of the supervisor, although the graduate students have dissatisfaction and resistance, but this dissatisfaction also stimulates the graduate students' fighting spirit to a certain extent, and makes them strive to improve themselves. But in the vast majority of cases, the function of implicit conflict is mainly negative. As an ideal type of concept classification, implicit positive conflict is only a theoretical logical classification, which needs to be verified through in-depth research.

The positive function and negative function of conflict are usually interwoven with the subjective initiative of the two sides of the conflict, the conflict situation, the type and degree of the conflict. The positive and negative functions of the conflict between tutors and students are not absolute. As long as both tutors and students, especially tutors, adopt positive attitudes and strategies to solve the conflict, it is possible to change the negative functions into positive functions. Of course, emphasizing the positive functions of conflict does not mean denying the harmful and even destructive consequences that conflict can bring. Nor does the distinction between explicit and implicit conflict imply a clear-cut boundary between them.

3. Countermeasures for Managing Conflicts between Mentors and Students

The basic goal of conflict management between tutors and students is to prevent the conflict from producing serious negative functions, and the highest goal is to establish a transformation mechanism from negative conflicts to positive conflicts, so as to realize the transformation of conflicts from negative functions to positive functions. Therefore, the main idea of conflict governance between tutors and students should be to eliminate the stereotypical influence of conflict between tutors and students, promote explicit positive conflict, prevent explicit negative conflict, and monitor implicit negative conflict.

3.1. Dispense with Stereotypes of Conflict Between Mentors and Students

To effectively manage conflicts, the correct conflict view is the premise. There are two main stereotypes of conflict between tutors and students: first, the conflict between tutors and students is perceived as explicit. This stereotype leads to widespread implicit negative conflicts not being taken seriously and effectively managed. Second, the conflict function between the tutor and the students is considered negative. Such stereotypes make both students and mentors tend to avoid conflicts, unwilling to face negative conflicts directly or take improper ways to deal with negative conflicts, leading to escalation of negative conflicts and even destructive consequences. Therefore, it is necessary to establish conflict governance workshops, seminars, lectures, etc. between tutors and students to change the stereotypes of tutors and students on conflict, and to fully and accurately understand the form and function of conflict between tutors and students. Establish a regular exchange and training mechanism for tutors, and explore ways and means to exert the positive function of conflict between tutors and students.

3.2. Establishing the Transformation Mechanism of Explicit Positive Conflict

This section proposes the establishment of the "safety valve" system to realize the transformation from implicit negative conflict to explicit positive conflict. Through the establishment of relevant network channels and the conduct of tutor teasing conferences and democratic life meetings, the dissatisfaction of both sides of the conflict was vented to prevent the destructive impact of the backlog of contradictions on the mentoring relationship. At the same time, the "educational conflict" is designed to play the function of conflict to promote moral education. By closely observing the changes in the emotions, attitudes and even micro-expressions of graduate students, whether the two sides are in a state of conflict and the degree of conflict are judged, and the conflict is transformed into educational conflict.

3.2.1. The "Safety Valve" System is Established to realize the Transformation from Recessive Negative Conflict to Explicit Positive Conflict

According to social conflict theory, there are two main types of "safety valve" systems [14]. The first type is to allow the conflict against the original object to be expressed or manifested by means or within limits approved by the group on the premise of not destroying the relationship within the group, such as dueling system, symbolic revenge system, etc. The other type is to set alternative targets so that the conflict that has been generated is not aimed at the original object, but expressed to the alternative object, such as the system that allows the spread of political jokes in modern society, the existence of satirical art, and sports competitions. The establishment of a "safety valve" mechanism can vent out the

dissatisfaction and confrontation of both sides of the conflict, and prevent the backlog of contradictions to the limit to bring destructive impact on the mentoring relationship. The safety valve system of the relationship between tutor and student can be established in two ways.

First, through the establishment of relevant network channels, the implicit conflict is made explicit, so as to achieve the goal of discharging hostile emotions. When there is a conflict between graduate students and their supervisors, some graduate students like to go to the media platform to ridicule and accuse their supervisors and vent their dissatisfaction. However, this method has certain limitations and uncontrollable. People tend to exaggerate when venting their grievances and making accusations, often choosing to present the facts in their favor. Due to the openness of the above websites and media, some graduate students' false accusations against their supervisors will have a negative impact on their reputation. Coupled with the media, it is easy to cause public opinion events. Therefore, the training unit can establish relevant network channels, which are only open to tutors and students in the school. The tutor can also go through the content often and introspect.

Secondly, we should carry out criticism and self-criticism through the way of conducting the joke meeting of tutors and the democratic life meeting of tutors and students, and show the differences and contradictions in an artistic or sincere way, so as to achieve the goal of venting pressure and dissatisfaction. The supervisor ridicule conference can vent the dissatisfaction between the supervisor and the graduate students in a relaxed, pleasant and humorous artistic form, which not only saves the face of both sides, but also alleviates the relationship between the supervisor and the student. In addition, holding a democratic life meeting to carry out criticism and self-criticism is also a valuable experience in dealing with conflicts. Most of the conflicts in the mentoring relationship originate from the difference of ideas. There are large age differences between supervisors and graduate students, and there are large generational differences in values, attitudes, and behaviors between tutors and students, which are important influencing factors of conflict. The teasing meeting of tutors and the democratic life meeting of tutors and students provide the possibility for exchanging ideas and promoting the integration of ideas.

3.2.2. Design "Educational Conflict", Give Play to the Function of Conflict to Promote Morality and Cultivate People

Graduate education is an educational interactive process based on knowledge production [15]. Tutors should not only train graduate students to master subject knowledge and its production methods, but also integrate values cultivation and moral cultivation into the process of knowledge production. Taking conflict as an educational method means that tutors can build on existing conflicts or design "educational conflicts" to achieve educational goals. Educational conflict refers to conflict with educational value. For example, in the process of knowledge production, in order to stimulate the research interest of graduate students and deepen their understanding of theory, they can "deliberately" put forward the concept or opinion opposite to graduate students' cognition, stimulate the motivation of graduate students to carry out academic contention. At the same time, it also provides an opportunity for graduate students to reflect from multiple angles, so that they can find the problems and logical loopholes. So as to cultivate the ability of graduate students to find and solve problems.

Due to the large structural differences between the tutors and students, the two sides should strengthen the interaction, not only academic interaction, but also educational interaction based on daily life. Although frequent interaction increases the probability of conflict, the rational use of conflict can increase the closeness of the relationship between learners. Conflict is an indicator of a close mentoring relationship. The close relationship between the guide students can greatly improve the effect of the mentor to cultivate morality and cultivate people, which is the so-called "kiss their tutors and believe their Tao". The free and warm debate and contention among the students of Southwest United University in history is a good story. The high frequency interaction and contention between the students helps to communicate the differences between the "two societies", and then achieves the "vision fusion" and forms a close mentoring community.

In the process of interaction with graduate students, tutors can closely observe the changes of graduate students' emotions, attitudes and even micro-expressions to determine whether the two sides are in a state of conflict and the degree of conflict, and turn the conflict into an educational conflict. At present, how to design conflicts and transform conflicts into educational methods and educational resources need to be further studied.

3.3. Establishing a Monitoring and Warning Mechanism for Hidden Negative Conflicts

Implicit conflict is the main form of conflict between mentors and students. Due to its hidden characteristics, the harm of the induced implicit conflict is easier to be ignored. In order to prevent the negative function of implicit conflict, it is necessary to establish the monitoring and early warning mechanism of implicit negative conflict. The goal of monitoring and early warning mechanism is to detect and resolve implicit negative conflicts in time. The conflict early warning and monitoring mechanism can provide conditions for taking active intervention measures before the destructive impact of conflict, and create conditions for transforming recessive negative conflict into explicit positive conflict. The monitoring and warning mechanism of implicit negative conflict mainly includes normal monitoring and dynamic feedback mechanism.

First, the normal monitoring mechanism of the mentoring relationship. When the implicit conflict occurs, the graduate students who are in the low power gap usually do not take the initiative to communicate with the supervisor or seek the help of the graduate training unit. This increases the difficulty of conflict identification. Although the form of implicit conflict is hidden, it is not invisible. With the rapid development of modern information technology such as mobile Internet, we media and artificial intelligence, mankind has stepped into the digital age. As deep users and dependents of modern information technology, the traces of graduate students' daily life can be seen in all kinds of "data". Through the comprehensive use of modern information technology such as artificial intelligence and big data, the mentoring relationship can be regularly monitored. For example, the monitoring center of mentoring relationship at the national or provincial level should be established to conduct regular monitoring by regularly collecting mentoring relationship data. Once the normal data of the mentoring relationship in a university is abnormal, the conflict intervention mechanism is immediately started. Of course, the ethics and privacy

protection involved in regular monitoring are also urgent topics to be further studied.

Second, the dynamic feedback mechanism of recessive negative conflict is induced. Normal monitoring data has a certain delay, and conflicts are often dynamic, uncertain and implicit. Therefore, in addition to establishing normal monitoring, a dynamic feedback mechanism should also be established to make timely response to hidden negative conflicts. Once the hidden negative conflict is detected, both sides of the conflict can anonymously (or real-name) put forward the conflict coordination appeal to the conflict monitoring center, or the monitoring center will feedback to the graduate training unit, and the graduate training unit will take targeted governance measures according to specific circumstances.

4. Conclusion

Current governance thinking focuses too much on conflict elimination and ignores the positive functions that conflict itself may have. Conflict is the norm in the relationship between mentors and students, and because of the heterogeneity between them and the unique structure of graduate education, implicit conflict becomes the main form of conflict. This kind of conflict can not only promote the integration of the tutoring community, but also act as an indicator of the closeness of the relationship and play the function of "safety valve". In addition, conflict is also an important means to achieve the goal of high-quality knowledge production and moral education. Therefore, conflict governance should not only emphasize conflict elimination, but also carry out precise governance for different forms and functions of conflict, including promoting beneficial explicit conflicts, preventing harmful explicit conflicts, and monitoring implicit negative conflicts, while discarding the stereotype that the goal is only to eliminate conflicts.

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