

On the Unique Development Path of Universities of Applied Sciences

Jing Zuo¹ Yanxin Ye²

1. Nanning University, Nanning, Guangxi, 530001, China

2. Guangxi University, Nanning, Guangxi, 530001, China

Abstract: The transition of universities from academy-oriented to application-oriented has become a paramount mission for the management. And the revelation of the path for the unique development lies in the six aspects below: locating specific talents-cultivating goals, innovating educational plans, developing distinctive teaching resources, enhancing instructions for students' vocation and employment, optimizing teaching equipment and increasing publicity.

Keywords: Universities of applied sciences; Uniqueness; Talents-Cultivation

1. Introduction

The paradox between difficult employment and tough hiring is a major social issue in China at present. It results from the unbalanced structure of higher education which is too keen to cultivate academic talents while neglects the training of applied talents. Chinese leaders, government ministries like Ministry of Education, and concerned universities have realized the issue and started relevant reformation. To begin with, under the guidance of Ministry of Education, local vocation colleges and other organizations established universities (colleges) of applied sciences union in 2013. Then on February 26th, 2014, Li Keqiang presided over a regular meeting with the State Council that aimed at promoting modern vocational education^[1]. And in 2015, the long-awaited Guidance on the Transformation of Normal Universities to Universities of Applied Sciences was jointly issued by Ministry of Education, National Development and Reform Committee and Ministry of Finance.

Measures mentioned above not only adapt to the real needs of industrial restructuring and transformation and upgrading, but also fit the significant actions of classified management, adjustment of development structure and perfecting modern education system, therefore providing great opportunities for local universities to transform and upgrade^[2].

Although vocational graduates are highly needed with the rapid development of economic society, for all the universities of applied sciences, whether they have the courage to think outside the box and act beyond their comfort zone is especially important for their long-term development.

2. The Paramount Mission of Universities of Applied Sciences' Unique Development

Compared with regular or academic universities, this kind of universities emphasis technicality, pertinence, practicality and the adaptation of economic and social development. They can better meet the various needs in the social phase of economic development and popularization of higher education^[3].

2.1 The Development of Chinese Economy are Highly in Need of Corresponding Talent Support

China's economic industry is facing transformation and development. As the talent pool of this nation, the education system must transform along with the reformation of economy in order to catch up with the progress of real economy. This way it can provide talents resource guarantee for implementing technics and skills strategy, thus improving overall competitiveness.

2.2 Pure Academic Graduates Cannot Satisfy the Needs of the Work Market

Nurturing academic graduates is the core goal of research-oriented universities. However, academic graduates often need more time to adjust to their work due to lack of practical experience. As more academic graduates enter the working place, the needs for them will decrease year by year.

2.3 Pure Professional and Technical Application-Oriented Talents' Further Growth is Limited

In recent years, applied science graduates can often get complements from society better than academic graduates. Even under the grim situation of current employment, it is not difficult for them to find suitable jobs. But in the

Corresponding Author: Jing Zuo, Email, zuojingnancy@qq.com.

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long run, problems exist in that their cultivation still focus too much on practice and neglect the study of theory^[4]. When this kind of graduates are employed, most of them are often stuck in elementary job like production work. It might be hard for them to get promotion as they lack what it takes to tap their potential.

2.4 Society's Need for Excellent Compound Talents are Increasing

Nowadays China's socialist market economy gradually improves and the essence of higher education changes from elite-only to mass-friendly. The need for talents presents a trend of variation. More employers are looking for graduates that not only are good in their specialties but also have potentials for improvement. Therefore, those who have technology research and management ability as well as operation skills are often the ones that can stand out and gain social attention and favor.

3. The Choice of the Unique Path of Universities of Applied Sciences

It is hard to excel if universities only satisfied in meeting the standard of the majority. In order to differentiate from other universities, the following aspects can be put into consideration.

3.1 Unique Targeting of Talents Training

It is a top priority to meet the needs of job market. And the management of universities should focus on cultivating practical skills, business management theory and concepts of science research. This way, graduates will have advantages in both practical and theoretical level.

3.2 Innovation of Teaching Plans

It is important to create new cultivation mode in education. That is to say, to nurture the ability of sustainable development while training students to master practical and theoretical ability. Classes should be able to provide professional and interdisciplinary knowledge. The aim of this kind of study is training excellent graduates that can perfectly meet the future job requirements^[5].

3.3 The Construction of Unique Teaching Resources

In order to build a team of "Bi-Professional" teacher, bringing in people with working experience is not enough, universities should also be aware of keeping a resourceful teaching team and improving their teaching ability so that they can combine the latest techniques with class contents. Only in this way can students grasp the knowledge and development trend from the cutting edge.

3.4 Optimizing Practical Teaching Environment

To realize the goal of cultivating great comprehensive talents, the practical teaching environment should be improved. By building all kinds of virtual simulation training centers, cooperating with companies and establishing

extra-curriculum basis, universities can provide students with real-life-experience teaching environment and cultivate their practical working ability.

3.5 Enhancing Instructions for Students' Vocation and Employment Plan

The guidance for students' future employment should begin after they enter college and should continue until they graduate^[6]. The point is to help them find a clear direction as early as possible and gain confidence so that they will have a better knowledge foundation for the future jobs choice and later promotion.

3.6 Increasing Publicity

The college management should put efforts on publicity planning, which can emphasis the schooling notion, cultivation focus and unique advantages. It is equally important to set up some brilliant case models and popular competitive specialties. These measures will absolutely bring out the characteristics of the university and enhance its overall schooling strength^[7].

4. Summary

Amid the society, the fiercest competition is the one among talents. The cultivation of a great number of new-fashioned competent talents can not only boost the comparative power of graduates but also improve universities' schooling volume. Only by continuous reform and innovation can higher education pave the way of cultivating more excellent and comprehensive students.

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