

# The Current Situation of Social Services in Higher Education Institutions and Its Reflection--The Example of GS Vocational Institute

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**Abstract:** As one of the four functions of higher vocational colleges, social service is an important embodiment of the connotation of higher vocational colleges and an inherent need to promote regional economic development and to be rooted in the local community. Based on the analysis of the annual statistics on the quality of higher vocational education of GS Vocational Institute, it is found that the proportion of full-time teachers with senior professional and technical positions is low, the number of patent achievements transformed is low, the main body of social service supervision and evaluation is absent and the process is missing. It is necessary to strengthen the construction of teachers, enhance the transformation of patent achievements, and provide some suggestions for the improvement of social services in higher vocational institutions.

**Keywords:** Higher Education Institutions; Social Services; Enhancement Strategies

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## 1. There is a unique value in strengthening the social service work of higher education institutions

From the very beginning of the university, it has naturally been entrusted with the important function of social service.

In the history of higher education in China, the *Educational Aims of the Republic of China and its Implementation Guidelines* was published in 1924, proposing that “university and specialized education must focus on subject content, develop specialized skills, and effectively cultivate a sound character for serving the nation and society”<sup>[6]</sup>. This is the earliest source of the social service function of universities in China established in the form of regulations.

After the founding of New China, China's vocational education system still retained some of the valuable ideas of industrial education and focused on the integration of education and industry. 31 January 1958, Mao Zedong proposed in the *Draft Working Methods*: “all laboratories and factories attached to higher technical schools that can carry out production should do so as far as possible, except for the needs of scientific research and teaching and study”<sup>[7]</sup>. Such schools, as emphasized by Comrade Mao Zedong, emphasized the combination of study and work. The second generation leader, Comrade Deng Xiaoping, on the basis of his inheritance of Comrade Mao's ideas on vocational education, put forward the strategic idea of science and technology as the first productive force in the light of the national conditions at that time. Since the reform and opening up, the country has continued to promote the mechanism and system of vocational education talent training, and the institutional mechanism of talent training has been improved and optimized. In January 2019, the State Council issued the *National Implementation Plan for Vocational Education Reform* (“Article 20 of Vocational Education”), which states that “higher vocational schools, cultivate high-quality technical and skilled personnel to meet the requirements of regional development, and strengthen lifelong learning services and community education The “Higher Vocational Schools, Cultivate High-Quality Technical Skills Talents to Meet Regional Development Requirements, Strengthen Lifelong Learning Services and Community Education”<sup>[8]</sup>. *The Opinions on the Implementation of the High-level Vocational School and Professional Construction Plan with Chinese Characteristics* states that in 2022, the higher vocational schools and

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professional clusters included in the project plan will have a greater improvement in terms of the level of operation, business level and international influence <sup>[9]</sup> .

## **2. The current situation of social services carried out by higher vocational institutions**

GS College is located in Dujiangyan, which is known as “the originator of the world's water culture” and has been awarded as one of the top 60 institutions in China for its contribution to higher education. During its 60 years of operation, the college has been actively exploring and practising the laws of teaching and learning in higher vocational education and the model of combining engineering with talent training, as well as attaching importance to practical training and practice both on and off campus. After more than 60 years of vocational education, the college has a wealth of experience in running schools, with “Double teacher type” teachers accounting for more than 60% of the total faculty. The company has worked with a number of enterprises in more than ten regions, including Chengdu, Leshan, Shifang, Dujiangyan, Ya'an, Ganzi, Nanchong and Aba, to carry out social services on a peer-to-peer basis, with over 110 service projects.

## **3. The shortcomings of higher education institutions in social services**

### **3. 1 Low percentage of full-time teachers in senior professional and technical positions**

Cultivating a high-quality teaching staff with “vocational education characteristics” is a necessary condition to accelerate the transformation of vocational education into a “type”, and is a prerequisite and fundamental task to promote the modernization and high-quality development of vocational education. According to the Quality Report on Higher Vocational Education 2020-2021 of GS Vocational Institute of Technology, the percentages of full-time teachers with senior professional and technical positions and full-time teachers with dual-teacher qualifications in 2021 are 70. 92% and 24. 28% respectively. The proportion of full-time teachers with senior professional and technical positions is only about one-third of that of full-time teachers with dual-teacher qualifications.

### **3. 2 Low number of patent results transformed**

As of 2021, the number of patent achievements transformed by the university is only 3. The overall level of patent achievement transformation rate is low and still far from that of undergraduate institutions. According to *Several Opinions on Improving the Quality of Patents in Higher Education Institutions to Promote Transformation and Application* issued by the Ministry of Education, the only way to achieve value innovation is to transform scientific and technological achievements such as patents in universities . In its daily work, the school focuses most of its efforts on teaching and strives to improve the level of schooling, without realizing the importance of the transformation of patent achievements; in addition, the school lacks specialists in the transformation of patent achievements and does not set up a work incentive mechanism for the transformation of patent achievements, so it is difficult to motivate the majority of teachers.

### **3. 3 Lack of subject and process of social service supervision and evaluation**

As early as 2015, the Office of the Education Supervision Commission of the State Council formulated *the Interim Measures for Assessing the Ability of Higher Vocational Institutions to Adapt to Social Needs (the Interim Measures)*. *The Interim Measures* proposed 20 assessment indicators, among which “social service capability” is mainly to assess the professional settings of schools, to provide technical services to enterprises and institutions, to build up the “dual-teacher” team and social service capability, etc. It also promotes the development of “dual-teacher” teams and social service capacity .

It is understood that only four cities and 21 states in Sichuan Province have included the assessment of vocational education quality in the year-end performance assessment of the local government, accounting for only 9.5% of the total.

## **4. Measures to enhance social services of vocational institutions**

### **4.1 “Internal training and external attraction” to strengthen the construction of senior professional and technical teachers**

The “internal training” of existing teachers is equally important as the revitalisation of the existing “stock”. A sound system of continuing education for teachers has been set up to encourage them to undertake off-the-job training and on-the-job training, and to make full use of the university's existing partner companies and industry-university-research platforms for practical training and to improve their professional skills. For example, the University of Wisconsin actively sends school experts, teachers and scholars, etc. to various regions of the country to understand the actual situation and conduct relevant technical training and guidance. Professional development programmes for teachers in higher vocational education in developed countries are also worthy of our reference and learning. The university has introduced a number of initiatives in terms of system building, talent introduction and teacher training to continuously increase its efforts in teacher building.

### **4.2 Enhancing the ability to transform patent results**

It is necessary to change the concept of the school's research workers and to correct the understanding of the transformation of patent results in order to improve the school's construction. The capacity of talents for the transformation of patent results is strengthened through thematic seminars and training, field surveys, and cooperation and exchange with allied universities. The university should also formulate patent management measures, standardize the system for distributing the income from patent results and revise the incentive policy for those who transform patent results, so as to fundamentally promote the development of the university's patent results transformation work.

### **4.3 Strengthen the supervision and evaluation of social services**

The first step is to give full play to the role of government supervisors, seek to do a good job in supervising, inspecting, evaluating and guiding the social services of schools. Secondly, the relevant administrative departments of the school should build a school education supervision and evaluation system, insisting on a combination of qualitative and quantitative assessment, regular supervision and evaluation and regular supervision and evaluation, taking social service work as one of the important indicators of supervision and evaluation. In addition, by incorporating the evaluation of enterprises into the main body of the school's social service evaluation. More importantly, it accepts social supervision and gradually building up an operational mechanism of supervision and evaluation that is government-led, market-operated, school-led and socially involved.

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