

Analysis on the Problems and Countermeasures of Chinese-Foreign Cooperation in Running Schools in Higher Education

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Abstract: Accompanied by economic globalization, the internationalization of higher education is developing rapidly in China at the moment, but we must maintain a clear understanding of Chinese-foreign cooperation in running schools. This paper studies the main problems existing in the process of Chinese-foreign cooperation in running schools of higher education in the process of educational resources introduction and utilization, and discusses its development countermeasure.

Key words: Chinese-foreign cooperation in running schools; Problems; Countermeasures

Chinese-foreign cooperation in running schools, as one of the important ways for Chinese institutions of higher education going global, has also become a school-running method adopted by more and more colleges and universities in China. On one hand, Chinese-foreign cooperative education can learn from the successful experience of running schools in developed countries, so that China's education level can be in line with the international level. Meanwhile, the introduction of excellent teaching resources will help China to learn advanced educational and management concepts, and cultivate high-quality, international compound talents. On the other hand, Chinese-foreign cooperative education provides students with a new learning environment, increases the opportunities for the public to receive diversified education, enables students to adapt to the needs of economic globalization much more quickly.

I. Achievements of Chinese-foreign cooperation in running schools of higher education in recent years

After years of development, Chinese-foreign cooperative education has continued to expand in scale and improve in quality. As of June 2, 2020, there were a total of 1,149 Chinese-foreign cooperative education institutions and projects at the undergraduate level or above approved by the Ministry of Education, including 119 non-independent legal entity projects. According to the survey report on the data of Chinese-foreign cooperative education in July 2020, the number of students in Chinese-foreign cooperative education has exceeded 600,000, and the number of graduates has exceeded 2 million. Among the 140 "double first-class" universities, 41% have established Chinese-foreign cooperative education institutions, and 48% of the 42 world-class universities and colleges have established Chinese-foreign cooperative education institutions. Chinese-foreign cooperative education has entered a new stage of high-level, high-quality and exemplary development. As an important part of China's higher education personnel training, the rapid development of Chinese-foreign cooperative education has greatly promoted the process of internationalization and modernization of China's higher education. The scale, quality and benefits of Chinese-foreign cooperative education have been developed in a coordinated manner. Judging from the development of Chinese-foreign cooperative education in the past decades, the scale, quality and efficiency have gradually found the point of integration. First, the scale has moderately developed. As of December 2020, there were a total of 1,242 Chinese-foreign cooperative education institutions and projects at the undergraduate level and above. Chinese-foreign cooperative education has met the diverse educational needs of the general public. Together with public and private colleges and universities, it has constituted a platform to promote higher education in China. Second, the quality has effectively improved. In recent years, the establishment of the supervision information platform, and the continuous improvement of the access mechanism, the annual quality assessment system, and the withdrawal mechanism have standardized the order, improved the quality, and promoted the healthy development of running schools. In addition, through the improvement of supervision and policies, teachers are encouraged to base themselves on practice, take the initiative to improve quality, establish a school-running brand, and

focus on connotative development. Last but not the least, the benefit has been steadily improved. From the perspective of economic benefits, Chinese-foreign cooperative education has continuously attracted students through advanced educational concepts, superior educational resources and diversified educational models. It has a broad student source market and is an important source of economic benefits. Although the fees for studying in this way are relatively high, compared with going abroad, it can save a lot of costs. Chinese-foreign cooperative education cultivates college students with international vision and local feelings. High-quality talents are valued by various departments and participate in the national economic construction, which indirectly brings long-term economic benefits. Thus from the perspective of social benefits, the reputation of Chinese-foreign cooperative education has been improved

II. Problems existing in Chinese-foreign cooperation in running schools of higher education

Although the speed of development is rapid, there are still some problems in Chinese-foreign cooperation in running schools of higher education. Some institutions and projects have problems such as insufficient introduction of high-quality educational resources, low teaching quality, weak professional ability in disciplines, and lack of connotative development mechanisms, which resulting in low student satisfaction, weak attraction, and unsustainable school-running activities. In 2018 and 2019, the Ministry of Education approved a total of 286 Chinese-foreign cooperative education institutions and projects to be terminated. Most of the institutions and projects approved for termination were voluntarily negotiated and applied by Chinese and foreign universities.

i. Unbalanced development of Chinese-foreign cooperation in running schools of higher education in regions

With the implementation of the Regulations of the People's Republic of China on Chinese-Foreign Cooperation in Running Schools in 2003, many colleges and universities have made great progress in this area, and Chinese-foreign cooperative education programs have entered a period of rapid development, but the problem of regional distribution imbalance is relatively serious. From the perspective of the areas where Chinese-foreign cooperation in running schools is carried out in China, they are mainly distributed in the economically developed eastern coastal areas such as Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin, Chongqing, Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Shandong; while Xinjiang, Gansu, Guizhou, Inner Mongolia and other economically backward central and western regions have fewer institutions and projects. Qinghai Province has only one undergraduate program of cooperative education, and Ningxia and Tibet currently do not have Chinese-foreign cooperative education institutions or projects. This shows that in the eastern coastal areas where educational resources are relatively concentrated, the development of foreign cooperative education projects is also relatively rapid; while the western remote areas are far behind.

ii. Some colleges and universities pay too much attention to economic benefits but the level of cooperation is low.

Some colleges and universities pay too much attention to the number of projects, enrollment and economic benefits in the education and teaching of Chinese-foreign cooperative education, and do not focus on comprehensively improving teaching, scientific research, subject level and comprehensive strength and competitiveness. A few colleges have not even formulated a feasible overall development plan for the education and teaching of Chinese-foreign cooperative education. At the same time, it should be noted that most of the educational institutions that are currently cooperating in running schools in China only regard cooperating schools as an important way to seize the Chinese education market and subsidize their own insufficient investment in education. Cooperation with Chinese universities should be viewed from the perspective of scientific research and academic exchanges. Driven by economic interests, students who pay high tuition fees often do not get the high-quality education that can match the cost. Many Chinese-foreign cooperative education programs are carried out in the form of "2+2" and "3+1", which means to study in China for two or three years, and then study abroad for one or two years. However, in the domestic study stage, the focus often becomes foreign language courses to ensure that students can pass the foreign language test to go abroad successfully, and the professional courses are quite weak.

iii. The level of foreign teachers varies, and there is a lack of an authoritative certification system

The effective implementation of Chinese-foreign cooperative education projects should be guaranteed by an international teaching faculty. Hiring foreign teachers to teach in China is the easiest and most effective way to get to this. The Regulations of the People's Republic of China on Chinese-Foreign Cooperation in Running Schools pointed out that "foreign cooperative education providers shall select a certain number of teachers from their educational institutions to teach in Chinese-foreign cooperative education institutions", and the foreign teachers and foreign management personnel hired "should have a bachelor's degree or above, corresponding occupations certification, and have more than 2 years of education and teaching experience". However, at this stage, there are lack of clear requirements for the number, employment period, training of foreign teachers, etc., and the examination and management of foreign teachers' qualification sources and certificates are not strict. Many foreign schools did not send their excellent teachers to China to participate in cooperative teaching in strict accordance with the requirements. Therefore, it is also a top priority to establish a foreign teacher certification system and a professional qualification certificate system as soon as possible.

III. Countermeasures and suggestions for the rational development of Chinese-foreign cooperative in running schools of higher education in the future

In addition to its own shortcomings in the development process, China's higher education Chinese-foreign cooperation also faces challenges from the international community. Such as Singapore's Global Campus Plan, South Korea's plan to introduce world-class universities to open graduate schools, and the United Arab Emirates to establish an education and training free trade zone in Dubai - Dubai Knowledge Village. Many countries have adopted different methods to increase the scramble for high-quality educational resources. These challenges are also worthy of our research, evaluation and response. Therefore, the sustainable development of Chinese-foreign cooperative education can only be achieved by following the laws, standardizing the running of schools, and managing according to the law.

i. Adhere to the correct direction of running schools and follow the principle of public welfare

Public welfare is one of the principles of Chinese-foreign cooperative education. The Notice of the Ministry of Education on Further Regulating the Order of Chinese-foreign Cooperative in Running Schools clearly states that "it is necessary to correct the guiding ideology of running schools, and resist and correct the misunderstanding and practice of using Chinese-foreign cooperative in running schools as a means of generating income for schools". Education is a public welfare undertaking. Both China and foreign parties should reach a consensus to ensure the quality of higher education, and should not harm the public interests of the country and society for temporary benefits. To this end, government departments can increase financial support for Chinese-foreign cooperative education projects to help colleges and universities establish a healthy and sound Chinese-foreign cooperative education system, especially the financial system, accounting system and auditing system of these institutions and projects. Reasonable use of education and management to generate surplus, and correctly handle the issue of economic returns for foreign investors are equitable. Acts that deviate from the principle of public welfare, blindly pursue economic interests, and damage the legitimate rights and interests of teachers or students should be prohibited and punished in accordance with the law.

ii. Cooperative institutions should be selected carefully, and foreign high-quality educational resources should be actively introduced

High-quality educational resources are the core of Chinese-foreign cooperative education. The so-called "high-quality" dose not only mean the advanced level, but also must be able to be used for the domestic education reality. When selecting partners, domestic colleges and universities should have a comprehensive understanding of the partners' qualifications, and collect information such as their school-running qualifications, capabilities, and academic reputation, or conduct on-the-spot inspections when necessary to prevent some illegal educational institutions from being confused. At the same time, according to the overall positioning of Chinese universities, closely combine the current economic development's demand for talents and the needs of discipline construction, domestic colleges and universities should

select foreign educational institutions with higher academic level and discipline and professional advantages to carry out cooperation, and ensure the introduction of courses with advanced levels and leading advantages, for example teaching materials, teaching concepts, teaching methods, teaching forms, teaching management systems, assessment methods, teaching staff and talent training models. In particular, from the perspective of long-term development, establishing and improving a long-term mechanism for the rational introduction and effective use of high-quality educational resources is necessary.

iii. Strengthen government guidance and improve the regulatory system

In 1995, the State Education Commission promulgated the Interim Regulations on Chinese-foreign Cooperation in Running Schools, which initially provided a legal basis for Chinese-foreign cooperation in running schools. In 2003, the Regulations of the People's Republic of China on Chinese-Foreign Cooperation in Running Schools was promulgated, which met the needs of further expanding the opening of education to the outside world, and was an important measure for China to further promote educational reform and development. However, realities show that relevant policies and regulations still need to be further refined and improved. The operation of Chinese-foreign cooperative education must strictly follow the requirements of regulations, and the competent education department should implement reasonable regulation and strict supervision, and gradually form a Chinese-foreign cooperative education management mechanism that combines self-discipline, social supervision and government supervision, and gradually establish a more extensive management mechanism. It is possible to explore the implementation of a school-running permit system, and to give policy-oriented preference to the establishment of examination and approval, admissions policies, fund allocation and resource allocation, etc., and low-level duplicate projects shall be limited at the time of examination and approval. Guide the focus of Chinese-foreign cooperation in running schools from quantitative expansion to qualitative improvement, use specific encouragement and support measures to actively promote exchanges and cooperation between higher education institutions in central and western China and foreign educational institutions, so as to truly enhance Chinese-foreign cooperation in running schools quality, and realize the sustainable development of Chinese-foreign cooperative education.

iv. Encourage cooperation between Chinese and foreign teachers to improve the teaching quality

As the name suggests, Chinese-foreign cooperation requires both Chinese and foreign teachers. Constrained by traditional concepts and university assessments, normally Chinese teachers can fulfill their duties and teach conscientiously in most cases in educational practice, but traditional cramming teaching is often criticized. However, Foreign teachers often use case analysis, flipped classrooms, group presentations and other methods, which are more lively and diverse, but the problem is that most of the are "flying teachers" recruited all over the world, which means short-term contract. Due to the lack of necessary constraints, the quality of teaching is difficult to control, and there have even been cases that foreign teachers left without any notice in the middle of the semester because they did not adapt to the Chinese environment. Therefore, in the practice of Chinese-foreign cooperation in running schools in higher education, we can consider adopting the teaching method of Chinese and foreign teachers' cooperation. On one hand, Chinese teachers can be exposed to international advanced teaching concepts and methods, and various methods can be used to fully motivate students' enthusiasm for learning. On the one hand, foreign teachers can communicate with Chinese teachers, which will help them to adapt to the teaching environment faster and better, and increase social interaction and reduce psychological pressures.

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