

Development of Higher Education in China

Zijun Zhang^{1,a,*}

¹*School of Marxism, Nanchang Normal University, Nanchang, Jiangxi, China*

a. zhuji@ncnu.edu.cn

**corresponding author*

Abstract: With the development of the times and the country, the development of education has taken on a strategic position. The development of higher education is more related to the reserve of social talents. This paper analyses the current situation of China's higher education development and its impact, and discusses the problems and challenges it faces and gives a series of suggestions. This paper argues that higher education provides important support for talent training and social development. Education is closely related to economic and social development. However, at the same time, higher education still faces challenges such as the slow internationalization of education and the difficulty of student employment. Based on this, the following suggestions are put forward in this article. Higher education should pay attention to the coordinated development of quality and quantity to achieve the sustainable development of higher education. At the same time, it is necessary to pay attention to cultivating international, innovative and other diversified talents.

Keywords: Higher education, internationalization of education, education development

1. Introduction

As the country's economy develops and people's living standards improve, higher education receives more support and investment, and the scale of higher education continues to expand. Specifically, the gross enrolment rate of higher education in China has increased year by year, and higher education has gradually changed from elite education to mass education. At the same time, the higher education system has been improving, with an increasing number of colleges and universities of various levels and types, forming a multi-level, multi-type and diversified higher education. Colleges and universities are constantly strengthening education and teaching reforms, focusing on cultivating students' practical ability and innovative spirit, and improving the quality and level of teaching. They are also strengthening scientific research innovation and transformation of achievements, providing strong support for national and local economic and social development. In addition, Chinese higher education is also pushing forward the process of internationalisation, with the continuous development of Chinese-foreign cooperative education and international student education. These initiatives have not only improved the internationalisation level of Chinese higher education, but also promoted the integration of Chinese higher education with the international community and the cultivation of talents with international vision and competitiveness. However, the development of Chinese higher education also faces some problems and challenges. Firstly, insufficient higher education resources are still one of the important factors restricting the development of Chinese higher education. With the expansion of the scale of higher education, the problem of shortage of

higher education resources is becoming more and more prominent. Secondly, the unbalanced development among colleges and universities is also one of the problems that need attention. Some colleges and universities are relatively backward in terms of faculty, research and facilities, which affects the improvement of the overall level [1]. Although the development of Chinese higher education has made remarkable achievements, it is still necessary to continue to strengthen educational and teaching reform, promote the internationalisation process, and focus on educational equity in order to cope with future challenges and opportunities. China's higher education power is both an organic part of the socialist modernisation power and a powerful support and inevitable requirement for achieving the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. Therefore, it is of great theoretical value and practical significance to clarify the historical development of Chinese higher education and the strategy of a strong nation [2]. Based on this, the paper analyses the factors that have contributed to the development of higher education at this stage and the important initiatives for future development.

2. Current Situation and Influence of Higher Education Development

2.1. The Development Status of Higher Education

With the development of society and economy, the number and scale of higher education institutions are expanding, and more and more students have the opportunity to receive higher education. The degree of internationalisation of higher education is also increasing, with more and more students choosing to study abroad or to further their studies in foreign universities. The quality of higher education is also improving, with schools continuously strengthening their teaching staff and optimising their curricula. Many countries have strengthened the regulation and assessment of higher education to ensure that the quality of education meets national standards and requirements. At the same time, the gender equality and inclusiveness of higher education are also being strengthened, and many universities are actively promoting gender equality education and exchanges and cooperation between different genders. In general, the development of higher education in the world has made remarkable achievements, but still faces some challenges and problems, such as the uneven distribution of educational resources and the need to improve the quality of education.

From 1901 to 2023, higher education in China has gone through a highly unusual phase from its birth to its tortuous development. Looking back over the past 122 years, higher education has evolved from an elitist phase to a later mass phase, until nowadays it has moved into a universal phase. However, both the United Kingdom and the United States of America entered the mass and popularisation of higher education decades ahead of China, especially the United States in 1970 has reflectentered the stage of popularisation of higher education. Although China's higher education endeavour started late, it has on the whole demonstrated a thick and thin potential for development. China is no longer focusing only on the speed and scale of development of higher education, but is paying more attention to the high-quality development of higher education.

Before the reform and opening up, China's economic development level was relatively backward, the state invested less research funds in colleges and universities, and the development of scientific research in colleges and universities was relatively slow. After the reform and opening up, as China's economic strength continues to strengthen, the level of scientific research in colleges and universities has steadily increased [3]. In the 21st century, China's higher education has ushered in vigorous development, China's educational resources are becoming more and more abundant, and the level of higher education is gradually improving. However, there is a large gap in the development level of higher education in various provinces in China. The indicators in the eastern coastal areas are significantly higher than those in the inland areas. Due to the poor foundation, the gap between the western region and other regions has gradually widened. These differences are mainly influenced by

industrial structure, economic development level, policy support and other aspects, which also reflect that education plays an important role in national development.

2.2. The Impact of Education on National Development

In the context of China's economy moving towards a stage of high-quality development, higher education will play a more critical role. The development of higher education has provided talent support for the country's scientific and technological innovation. Higher education institutions have trained a large number of high-level talents, who play an important role in scientific research, education, production and other fields, promoting the development of national science and technology innovation. Meanwhile, higher education institutions cooperate with enterprises and provide intellectual support for their technological innovation and industrial development [4]. In addition, the development of higher education has contributed to the social stability and harmonious development of the country. Higher education has cultivated a large number of talents with a sense of social responsibility and public spirit, who play an important role in social service, community building and cultural inheritance, thus promoting the harmonious development of the country's society. High-quality talents cultivated by higher education play an important role in international exchanges and cooperation, and they represent the image and voice of the country, winning more voice and influence for the country in international competition [5]. The development of China's higher education has a far-reaching impact on the country, which not only contributes to the country's scientific and technological innovation, economic development, social stability and harmonious development, but also provides support for the country's position and influence in international competition to be enhanced.

Higher education has two important roles in promoting national science and technology innovation and economic development. First, in terms of talent training and knowledge innovation, higher education carries the functions of training innovative talents and scientific knowledge innovation. Secondly, in terms of the application and transformation of technological achievements and support for regional industrial development, higher education plays an obvious role as a bridge [6]. China's higher education system has developed rapidly in recent years, with a large number of higher education institutions of all types, meeting the needs of the general public for higher education. At the same time, the Chinese government has been actively promoting the popularisation of higher education, and has been continuously increasing the popularisation rate of higher education through measures such as expanding the scale of enrolment, improving the quality of education, and strengthening the construction of infrastructure. At the same time, the disciplines are rich and diverse, covering various fields. The establishment of these disciplines not only meets the needs of social development, but also provides diversified choices for the study of the majority of students. With the in-depth development of economic globalisation, China's higher education is also gradually moving towards internationalisation. More and more Chinese colleges and universities have established cooperative relationships with foreign colleges and universities to carry out academic exchanges, mutual visits of teachers and students, and cooperative research activities. This not only promotes China's higher education to be in line with international standards, but also provides more opportunities for cultivating talents with international vision.

Meanwhile, China's higher education system is in the process of continuous reform and development to meet the needs of social and economic development. For example, some colleges and universities have begun to try to reform the traditional teaching mode, adopt more flexible teaching methods and approaches, and focus on cultivating students' practical and innovative abilities. At the same time, the government is also strengthening the supervision and evaluation of higher education and promoting the continuous improvement of the higher education system.

In conclusion, China's higher education has made remarkable achievements in terms of scale, subject settings, faculty strength, degree of internationalisation and reform and development. However, with the rapid development of society and economy, higher education is facing more and more challenges.

3. The Interaction between Politics, Economy and Higher Education in China

3.1. Emphasis on the Development of Political Talent

The influence of politics on Chinese higher education is obvious. As an important part of society, higher education is bound to be influenced by the political environment. Under the socialist system, the goals, directions, and policies of higher education are all influenced by socialist political thought, and at the same time must follow the state's educational guidelines. This political influence is reflected in the curriculum, teaching content, teaching methods and evaluation standards of higher education.

Through theoretical analysis, it is found that the multi-agent structure of higher education governance comes from the government, universities and society. The interaction between government and society promotes the development of the government's role. The government's role needs to be positioned in the main structure of higher education governance [7]. Chinese higher education attaches importance to talents in political terms, as determined by the leadership of the Communist Party of China and the superiority of the socialist system with Chinese characteristics. Chinese higher education pays attention to the cultivation of outstanding talents with political qualities, moral qualities, cultural literacy, professional skills and other multifaceted abilities, to meet the needs of national and social development.

In China, Law of Higher Education established an institutional governance system for public universities. The institutional system is led by an appointed president under the leadership of the University Communist Committee of the Party (UCCP). In this system, the Secretary of the UCCP presides over the overall work of the CCP and fulfils the requirements of ideological and political work [8]. Chinese higher education attaches importance to the cultivation of talents in politics, which is determined by the leadership of the Communist Party of China and the superiority of the socialist system with Chinese characteristics, as well as to meet the needs of national and social development. Through measures such as strengthening political education, improving political quality and cultivating innovative talents, Chinese higher education has made important contributions to the development of the country and society.

3.2. Contribution to the Economy

The economic impact of abundant educational resources is positive, helping to increase labour productivity, promote innovation and entrepreneurship, and foster regional economic development, among other things.

First, education can improve labour productivity by raising the quality and skill level of the workforce and making them more responsive to market demand and production needs. This helps to improve the production efficiency of enterprises and promote economic growth. Secondly, the abundance of educational resources helps to nurture more innovative and entrepreneurial talents who are more likely to launch new business activities and promote economic development. At the same time, the enrichment of educational resources also provides enterprises with more opportunities for innovation and research and development, and promotes industrial upgrading and technological progress. Finally, the abundance of educational resources helps to improve the overall competitiveness and attractiveness of a region and promotes regional economic development. Regions with rich educational resources can attract more investment and talent, improving the region's overall economic strength and market competitiveness.

However, it should be noted that the abundance of educational resources is only one factor in promoting economic development, and other factors, such as the policy environment, market environment, natural resources and so on, also need to be considered. Only based on a comprehensive consideration of various factors can economic development be promoted in a more comprehensive manner. However, it should be noted that the abundance of educational resources is only one factor in promoting economic development, and other factors, such as the policy environment, market environment, natural resources and so on, also need to be considered. Only based on a comprehensive consideration of various factors can economic development be promoted in a more comprehensive manner.

4. Problems and Challenges

Because of the vulnerability even in school settings. There were school and university closures that happened during the outbreak of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome or SARS in China in 2003. In Hong Kong, for example, there were 1,302 schools which closed, 1,000,000 children stayed at home, and 50,600 teachers faced challenges in using technology to provide education to their students [9]. COVID-19 has brought many challenges to higher education in China. As a result of the epidemic, schools were unable to open normally, and classes could only be conducted through online education, which required teachers and students to have certain IT skills, as well as corresponding technical support and guarantees from the schools. During the epidemic, the learning mode of students changed from traditional face-to-face teaching to online learning, which required students to have higher independent learning and self-management skills. At the same time, the epidemic has exacerbated the problem of imbalance in education resources. Some students in remote or impoverished areas may not have access to quality educational resources, while some urban students can access more learning resources and opportunities through the Internet.

Chinese higher education is currently facing a number of problems and challenges. Firstly, with the expansion of higher education, the number of college graduates is rising year by year, the employment situation is grim, and the problem of an oversupply of talent in some specialties is gradually coming to the fore. Secondly, the teaching quality and management level of some colleges and universities need to be improved, and the problems of insufficient teaching facilities and resources still exist. In addition, the internationalisation process also faces challenges in terms of teachers' qualifications and curricula.

These problems and challenges affect the quality and future development of Chinese higher education to a certain extent. Specifically, the following problems and challenges are worthy of attention:

Firstly, with the popularisation of higher education, the number of college graduates is increasing year by year, but the employment situation is not optimistic. There is a surplus of talent in some specialties, which leads to fierce competition for employment and low quality of employment. This requires colleges and universities to focus on market demand in the process of talent cultivation, strengthen practical teaching, and improve the comprehensive quality and competitiveness of students.

Secondly, some colleges and universities have certain problems in teaching quality and management level, such as uneven teacher quality, insufficient teaching facilities and resources, and unreasonable curricula. These problems affect the learning effect of students and the teaching motivation of teachers, and they need to strengthen the teaching management and improve the quality and level of teaching.

Thirdly, as the internationalisation of Chinese higher education accelerates, teachers, curricula and teaching methods are facing new challenges. There is a need to strengthen international exchanges and cooperation, introduce high-quality educational resources, improve the level of teachers and the quality of programmes, and cultivate talents with an international outlook and competitiveness.

Finally, the problems of uneven distribution of higher education resources and unequal educational opportunities still exist. Some regions and groups face more difficulties and challenges in higher education, and there is a need to strengthen the guarantee and promotion of educational equity so that more people can enjoy quality higher education resources.

Higher education in China faces several problems and challenges, and needs to strengthen the quality of teaching and management, promote the internationalisation process, and focus on educational equity, etc., to cope with future challenges and opportunities. At the same time, there is also a need for continuous exploration and innovation to inject new impetus and vigour into the development of higher education.

5. Recommendations for the Development of Higher Education

5.1. Leveraging Scale Effect and Agglomeration Effect

After the reform and opening up, China implemented the expansion of higher education to meet the people's demand for higher education [10]. Focusing on the scale and agglomeration effects of higher education development is one of the important directions of higher education development.

The scale effect refers to the fact that the expansion of the scale of higher education can bring benefits such as more educational resources, better quality of education and more employment opportunities. Expanding the scale of higher education, can better meet the social demand for higher education and improve the popularity and social influence of higher education. The clustering effect refers to the fact that the clustering of higher education institutions can bring benefits such as more exchanges, cooperation and resource sharing. By clustering higher education institutions, it can promote academic exchanges, discipline intersection, talent flow, etc., which is conducive to improving the quality and innovation capacity of higher education.

Therefore, focusing on the scale effect and agglomeration effect of higher education development can promote the rapid development and improve the quality of higher education, and at the same time can better meet the social demand for higher education. In the process of promoting the development of higher education, it is necessary to focus on the coordination and cooperation of policy guidance, financial support, resource integration and talent training to achieve the sustainable development of higher education.

5.2. Playing the Role of Government

The State plays a key role in promoting the development of higher education. The State provides important support and guarantees for the development of higher education by formulating policies, providing financial support and strengthening supervision.

Firstly, the state guides the development direction of higher education by formulating policies. The state will formulate corresponding education policies, such as talent cultivation objectives, discipline settings and curriculums, according to the needs of social and economic development, to promote the development of higher education.

Secondly, the state promotes the development of higher education by providing financial support. The State will provide the necessary financial support for higher education through financial allocations, the establishment of scholarships, subsidies for poor students, and so on, to ensure the development of higher education.

In addition, the State will strengthen regulations to ensure the quality and fairness of higher education. The State will formulate relevant laws and regulations to regulate the behaviour of higher education and strengthen education supervision, to ensure the quality and fairness of higher education.

In short, the state plays a key role in promoting the development of higher education by formulating policies, providing financial support and strengthening supervision. At the same time,

the healthy development of higher education also requires the joint efforts and support of schools, teachers, students and all sectors of society.

5.3. Elite Education and Innovative Talents

Behind the idea of "superior education" of various top-notch innovative talent training programmes lies the concept of "elite education" [11]. Popularising elite education and innovative talents is also one of the important directions for the development of higher education. Elite education refers to the provision of high-quality educational resources for a small number of outstanding students and the cultivation of elite talents with a high degree of comprehensive quality and innovative ability. Innovative talents refer to talents with creative awareness and innovative ability, who can adapt to changes in social development and propose new ideas and methods to solve practical problems.

To popularise elite education and innovative talents, it is necessary to start from the following aspects:

First, by increasing the number of tertiary institutions and expanding the scale of enrolment, the objective of expanding the coverage of quality tertiary education resources and raising the tertiary education popularisation rate will be achieved. More students will be provided with the opportunity to receive quality higher education and quality education will be achieved.

Second, the need to focus on the personalised development of students, provide diversified programmes and activities according to students' interests, strengths and potentials, and nurture talents with innovative spirit and abilities.

Third, to cultivate innovative talents with international competitiveness, the country needs to strengthen international exchanges and cooperation in higher education. International high-quality educational resources have been introduced to broaden students' international horizons.

Fourth, through practical projects, internships and training, it promotes cooperation between industry, academia and research, creates a talent training model that integrates industry, academia and research, and improves students' practical ability and sense of innovation. Fifthly, establish a scientific talent evaluation system, encourage students to innovate and explore, and provide a good environment and conditions for the cultivation of innovative talents.

Fifth, Establish a scientific talent evaluation system to encourage and stimulate students to explore innovation and provide a favourable environment and conditions for the cultivation of innovative talents.

Therefore, in the era of popularisation, China's higher education governance needs to move from the top-down national planning perspective to the bottom-up grass-roots innovation perspective, and make use of the design and combination of sophisticated governance mechanisms to promote the overall higher education modernisation development strategy at the macro level, which is closely related to the goal-orientation of grass-roots organisations or individuals at the micro level, and to realise both precise policy-making and fine governance in terms of governance content, to effectively This will enable a mutually beneficial and win-win situation under the interaction between the central government and the local government, to accurately lay out the important and difficult points of China's higher education governance, and explore a model of higher education governance with Chinese characteristics [12]. Popularising elite education and innovative talents requires coordination and cooperation in policy guidance, financial support, resource integration and talent cultivation to achieve sustainable development of higher education. At the same time, it is also necessary to focus on the quality and fairness of higher education to ensure that the popularisation of higher education can truly benefit the general public.

5.4. Diversified International Cooperation and Exchanges

It is very important for higher education to strengthen diversified international cooperation and exchange, which helps to improve the quality and influence of higher education, promote the sharing and exchange of educational resources, and cultivate talents with an international outlook and competitiveness. Only by recognising the limited rationality of organisations or individuals can people lay the foundation for synergistic cooperation between governance subjects with equal rights and responsibilities, knowledge interoperability and complementary strengths, which cannot be separated from the construction and improvement of knowledge construction and cooperation network of multiple subjects with normative, openness and inclusiveness [11].

To achieve the goal of diversified international cooperation and exchange in higher education, the following measures need to be taken:

First, the government should formulate relevant policies to encourage and support international cooperation and exchanges among universities, and provide financial and resource support.

Second, colleges and universities should establish an international talent training mechanism, formulate international talent training programmes, and strengthen foreign language teaching and the cultivation of intercultural communication skills.

Third, universities should actively seek opportunities for cooperation with international universities and research institutes and establish cooperative relationships for joint research, exchanges and talent training.

Therefore, strengthening diversified international cooperation and exchanges in higher education can help improve the quality and influence of education and cultivate talents with international vision and competitiveness.

6. Conclusion

This paper mainly focuses on the development of higher education in China. It also discusses the problems and challenges it has encountered, and then puts forward several relevant recommendations. Chinese higher education has experienced rapid growth over the past few decades, becoming one of the largest and most diverse higher education systems in the world. At the same time, Chinese higher education is also strengthening exchanges and cooperation with countries around the world, carrying out academic exchanges, cooperative research and exchanges of studies Chinese higher education is also constantly exploring new modes of education and teaching methods. With the development of information technology, digital and online education is gradually becoming an important trend in higher education.

The development of Chinese higher education is also facing some challenges and problems. How to cope with the ageing population and changes in the job market, how to improve the quality of education and internationalisation, and how to cope with the imbalance of educational resources are all challenges that Chinese higher education needs to face. To meet these challenges, Chinese higher education needs to continue to strengthen cooperation with enterprises and society, improve the efficiency of educational resources, enhance international exchanges and cooperation, and actively explore new educational models and teaching methods.

Higher education in China has achieved tremendous development over the past decades and has made significant contributions to the development of the economy and society. In the future, Chinese higher education will continue to face challenges and opportunities, and will need to be constantly reformed and improved to meet the needs of social and economic development.

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