

Research on the Status Quo and Countermeasures of the Internationalization of Graduate Education in China's Colleges and Universities Against the “Double First-Rate” Background

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Abstract: The quality of graduate education will directly affect the development of China's core competitiveness. This paper analyzes the current status of the internationalization of graduate education in colleges and universities of China, discusses the successful experience of internationalization of graduate education in top foreign universities. By learning from the advanced experience of developed countries, this paper points out that colleges and universities in China need to improve the international competitiveness of graduate education from the aspects of training mechanism, curriculum design, assessment methods and cooperation modes.

1. Introduction

At the National Graduate Education Conference held in July 2020, General Secretary Xi Jinping made important instructions for graduate education. Xi emphasized that graduate education plays an important role in cultivating innovative talents, improving innovation capabilities, serving economic and social development, and promoting the modernization of the national governance system and governance capabilities [1]. It is the next goal for China's postgraduation education to explore the establishment of a graduate education system with Chinese characteristics and a world-class level under the new situation. Therefore, promoting the internationalization of graduate education is not only an inevitable requirement for the development of higher education in China, but also a fundamental trend in the development of higher education in the world [2].

2. The Status Quo of Internationalization of Graduate Education in China's Colleges and Universities

It is one of the important goals of graduate training in colleges and universities to educate graduates, as high-tech talents in the country's future scientific and technological development, to have an international perspective and the ability to participate in international scientific research cooperation. Therefore, accepting international curriculum education during school is an important guarantee for achieving this training goal. From the perspective of the internationalization of the curriculum system, the currently widespread internationalization of graduate education in colleges

and universities mainly adopts the following two methods:

The first is to attract domestic and foreign students by building modular courses taught in English [3]. At present, colleges and universities across the country, especially the double first-rate construction colleges and universities, attach great importance to the internationalization of courses. In the course of teaching, in addition to compulsory English courses for doctoral and master's degrees, a certain number of professional elective courses in English or bilingual education are also offered. In terms of curriculum settings, on the basis of existing graduate training programs, learn more from the training programs of first-rate disciplines and majors in developed countries, increase and supplement advanced foreign research results, cutting-edge research trends, and interdisciplinary curriculum content, and actively develop internationally significant courses and academic frontier courses.

The second is to build an international curriculum system by opening summer schools and offering high-quality summer courses. Summer school, a form of schooling originated in the United States, is a form of schooling for colleges and universities to organize teaching in the summer. Through the summer school, a wealth of curriculum learning resources and scientific research practice opportunities can be provided for domestic and foreign university students, middle school students and the public. For example, since Peking University first opened a summer school in China in 2004, it has always adhered to the concept of open education, attracting many students from Peking University and outstanding students from other universities at home and abroad. All courses during the summer school are taught in English, and the content of the courses are mainly in the fields of Chinese history, politics, culture and economics. Through the establishment of an all-English curriculum system in the summer school, Peking University has not only attracted many outstanding students from world-class universities to study and exchange in China, but also provided a very good learning and exchange platform for students from different cultural and historical backgrounds. It further expands Peking University's international reputation and world influence. At present, Peking University's International Summer School has become an important window for Peking University's international education and cultural exchanges [4].

In addition to the construction of the graduate internationalization curriculum system, domestic universities generally promote the internationalization of their graduate education by choosing to establish joint training bases and cooperative projects with foreign universities. For example, in 2007, 12 universities in Beijing established a joint training base for domestic and foreign graduate students with the funding of the Beijing Municipal Education Commission. The base mainly adopts Sino-foreign cooperation and exchange plans, short-term training, Chinese funded overseas training, and scientific research project cooperation and exchanges. The establishment of the cooperative base has greatly improved the comprehensive scientific research quality of graduates participating in the construction of the base, broadened the international vision of the graduates of the school. It also improves the level of scientific research innovation, and strengthens the ability of scientific research practice [5] [6].

3. Internationalized Experience of Graduate Education in Foreign First-Rate Colleges and Universities

Colleges and universities in developed countries have implemented the internationalization of graduate education relatively early, and they attach great importance to the internationalization of graduate education in terms of ideology. Through summarizing and analyzing and drawing on their successful experience, it will undoubtedly be very useful for improving the internationalization level of graduate education in China. This paper selects colleges and universities in Germany, America and Britain as the key research.

3.1 The Status Quo of Internationalization of Graduate Education in German Colleges and Universities

Germany is the birthplace of modern graduate education. Graduate education in German universities is enlightened by the apprenticeship training method of graduates. In order to promote the internationalization of higher education, German colleges and universities began to reform the degree structure at the end of the 20th century, and changed the original “long” academic system that integrates undergraduate and master degrees into internationally recognized bachelor and master degrees. In addition, it actively introduces the credit system, recognizes the diplomas and achievements of foreign colleges and universities, simplifies the procedures for the recognition of diplomas and achievements abroad, and actively attracts international students and outstanding talents to further study in Germany. At present, the main partners of German universities are still concentrated in developed countries in Europe and the United States, among which the closest is France. According to statistics, there are more than 2,100 cooperative projects between German and French universities, followed by German-British cooperation projects, with more than 1,800 [7]. At present, the international cooperation partners of German universities have spread to 135 countries and regions in the world. Among them, there are more than 350 international cooperative teaching and research projects with Chinese colleges and universities. Most of these projects are international cooperation projects in graduate education.

From the perspective of cooperation fields, the disciplines of the German university education internationalization project mainly involve natural sciences and engineering, as well as humanities and social sciences. From the perspective of specific cooperation methods, it mainly includes exchange of students, exchange of scientific research personnel, recognition of credits, cooperation in research, joint development of training programs, establishment of cooperative scholarship projects, and establishment of cooperative teaching and research institutions. According to statistics, from the early 1990s to 2010, 25% of students in comprehensive universities in Germany had experience of studying abroad, and 20% of students in universities of applied technology had studied abroad. At the stage of master's education, up to 40% of German students choose to study abroad [7].

3.2 The Status Quo of Internationalization of Graduate Education in American Colleges and Universities

American graduate education was enlightened in Germany and developed under the stimulation of the German graduate education model. Since the 21st century, the American Association of International Educators has put forward a series of policy recommendations to strengthen the cultivation of internationalization, and fully mobilize and utilize all the forces of various organizations and state governments to support and encourage the development of internationalization of education. In order to cope with the challenges of students and faculty brought by the increasing strength of graduate education in the European Union and other countries, the United States has elevated graduate education to a national strategic level and actively adopted various policies to ensure the global dominance of American graduate education [7].

From the perspective of cooperation mode, the internationalization of graduate education in the United States is usually carried out through academic cooperation between domestic universities and one or more foreign universities. Among them, the dual degree program is an important form of the internationalization of American graduate training. According to statistics, in 2007, approximately 29% of American Graduate School Committee member universities launched joint degree or dual degree programs. As of 2008, this number has accounted for half of all member schools [8]. In many years of exploration and practice, the United States has formed a diversified

model of international schooling. In addition to the joint graduate training program mentioned above, it also actively establishes branch schools overseas and vigorously develops online distance education. The results of a survey of the foreign cooperation areas of American universities show that 36% of universities indicated that they have carried out joint training cooperation projects with European structures, 18% of universities indicated that they had cooperated with mainland China, and 14% of universities indicated that they had developed cooperation projects with India. 12% of colleges and universities have carried out cooperative projects with South Korea, and 8% of colleges and universities stated that they have carried out joint training programs with universities in Taiwan, Mexico, and Singapore [9].

In addition to diversified cooperative training models, American universities are also actively adopting various approaches and methods to expand the international level of graduate courses. For example, the University of California at Berkeley offers about 600 international courses and more than 80 foreign language courses every year; MIT has launched “Open Courseware” which is freely available to the world through the Internet. On the one hand, domestic and foreign students can share its high-quality resources, and on the other, On the one hand, the courses of American universities are gradually being taught by the international academic community, and their online courseware has been translated into multiple languages. The construction of international courses and “open courseware” has created convenient conditions for the internationalization of American graduate education [10].

3.3 The Status Quo of Internationalization of Graduate Education in British Colleges and Universities

Britain is a famous “country of studying abroad”. In the course of the development of graduate education for one and a half century, on the one hand, it has continuously absorbed the advanced experience of other countries in graduate education. On the other hand, it has also continuously reformed and improved its own graduate education system, and finally through unremitting efforts, it has become a worldwide leader in graduate education. British colleges and universities generally implement an open talent training model that is self-directed and innovative. Its flexible learning method and degree-granting model have attracted outstanding talents from all over the world to pursue further studies. In addition, the relatively easy application procedures and application procedures for scholarships for international students have greatly enhanced the enthusiasm of international students to apply. According to statistics, as of 2018, the number of international students in the UK accounted for 41% of the total number of graduate students in the UK, which is much higher than China’s 2.9% [11].

4. Countermeasures and Suggestions for Promoting the Internationalization of Graduate Education in China's Colleges and Universities

Based on the advanced experience of internationalization construction of first-rate colleges and universities in developed countries in Europe and the United States, combined with China’s existing national conditions and the characteristics of higher education institutions, the internationalization of graduate education in China needs to focus on training mechanisms, curriculum settings, assessment methods, cooperation models, etc. Proceeding from this, it is possible to enhance the international competitiveness of China's graduate education by methods such as building an internationalized curriculum system for graduate students and broadening international cooperation channels. The specific countermeasures include the following three aspects:

4.1 Pay Attention to the Curriculum and the International Construction of the Teaching Staff

The first is the internationalization of graduate courses. The construction of the internationalized curriculum system for graduates should not only strengthen the construction of international knowledge system, curriculum content, and course materials, but also learn from, introduce and cultivate advanced teaching concepts, teaching models, teaching content and teaching methods, so as to provide an important guarantee for graduates to expand their horizons and optimize their knowledge structure. Secondly, integrate the existing international resources. Colleges and universities should continuously improve the enthusiasm of teachers in bilingual or English teaching, such as setting up special funding projects, and formulating incentive policies for teachers with overseas study or visiting experience after returning to school such as setting bilingual or English courses. By these strategies, an international faculty team that takes into account the level and quantity can be created. To build a first-class faculty team, one is to “go out” and the other is to “bring in.”

4.2 Carry out Multi-Modal and Multi-Channel International Cooperation

The in-depth implementation of the “Belt and Road” Initiative provides an opportunity to deepen the international cooperation in graduate education of countries along the “Belt and Road” route, and provides a broader platform for strengthening the international exchanges of graduate students in China. Domestic colleges and universities should seize the opportunity to expand the channels of cooperation in running schools and studying in China through multiple methods, so as to innovate the international education exchange model. On the one hand, schools should actively explore multi-mode international exchanges and cooperation channels, expand projects like the graduate joint training, overseas research and cooperation with internationally renowned universities and scientific research institutions. They should actively promote the cooperation mechanisms such as inter-university cooperative training, mutual recognition of credits, and mutual grant of degrees. What's more, they can build international exchanges and cooperation platforms such as Sino-foreign cooperation in running schools, co-construction of research centers, international academic exchange forums, international summer schools, international innovation and entrepreneurship competitions, so as to enrich the overseas experience of graduate students, broaden their international horizons, enhance international competitiveness, and the overall level of graduate international training. On the other hand, with the continuous improvement of China's colleges' and universities' international influence and educational level, the attractiveness as a destination for studying abroad will also continue to increase. Therefore, it is the time to take advantage of this opportunity to strengthen the promotion of the characteristics and advantages of China's higher education, so as to attract more European and American students to study and exchange in China.

4.3 Strengthen Policy and Financial Support

On the one hand, in combination with the new era and new situation and the new development of graduate education, China should accelerate the improvement and revision of the *Education Law* and other laws and regulations, establish a legal and regulatory system for the internationalization of education, and provide development directions and policy guarantees for the implementation of the internationalization of graduate education. Only in this way can China promote the healthy and stable development of international cooperation projects for graduate education. On the other hand, in view of the insufficient access to resources of colleges and universities, the government should increase its support for cooperative education policies and access to resources, strengthen the evaluation and supervision of the approval and operation of international exchange projects. It is necessary to prevent certain colleges and universities from expanding blindly and ignoring their school-running qualification in the process of international cooperation in running schools. In

addition, the government in China also need to increase funding for the internationalization of graduate education, guide universities and scientific research institutions to obtain funding support through participating in international cooperation projects, form a diversified and stable funding mechanism, and provide funding guarantees for the introduction of advanced foreign educational resources.

5. Conclusion

The internationalization level of graduate education is one of the important criteria for evaluating the development level of graduate education in a country. China's graduate education is in the midst of rapid technological development and social and economic globalization. It faces both opportunities and many challenges. In the final analysis, improving the internationalization of graduate education is a long and systematic project, and its path is all-round. Colleges and universities need to be based on their own reality, clarify the development position of the school, and establish international training goals and specific tasks. They need to strengthen top-level design, integration of internal and external resources, careful deployment, and overall arrangements to ensure the formation of organizational and management joint forces. Meanwhile, they need to improve the international curriculum system and build an international training system for graduate students. Internally, colleges and universities in China need to build a high-level faculty with an international perspective, guarantee and improve the quality of graduate training. Through the high-quality development of graduate education, the quality of school disciplines and majors can be promoted, and the needs of the demand for high-level innovative talents for national and social economic development can be met, so as to better serve the national development strategy.

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