Characteristics of the International Development of Australian Higher Education

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Abstract: Australia is in the forefront of the internationalization of higher education in the world, after years of development, its strategic direction, policy guidance, institutional protection and other aspects have taken a series of powerful measures, the level of higher education internationalization is also in the forefront, becoming one of the countries with a higher degree of internationalization of higher education in the world. By studying the higher education internationalization in Australia, this paper analyzes the characteristics and experiences of the higher education internationalization in Australia, and provides some suggestions for the higher education internationalization of our country in terms of the system guarantee, strategic goals, education level, personnel training and marketization.

International education is an important part of the Australian economy and is recognised as one of five areas that are rapidly facilitating Australia's transition from a resource-based economy to a modern service economy, providing talent for both domestic and international business development and building strong international relationships.Over the years, the development of international education has not only effectively improved Australia's international competitiveness in education, science and technology, culture and other fields, but also attracted a large number of students, especially students from the Asia-Pacific region, to study in Australia, bringing huge economic benefits to Australia.

Before the coronavirus pandemic hit the world, Australia's international education industry had become the third largest export industry after steel and coal.In 2019, nearly 960,000 international students came to Australia to study, and the international education industry contributed $40 billion to the Australian economy that year, supporting 260,000 jobs, making it the third largest economic pillar industry in the country.[1] In addition to the economic benefits, international education also has a positive impact on Australian society, culture and diplomacy, such as increasing local tertiary education enrolment, alleviating the shortage of highly skilled talent in the country, and expanding Australia's influence in the Asia-Pacific region.

1. Brief description of the development process of the internationalization of Australian higher education

1.1 Period: from World War II to the 1980s

The beginning of internationalization of higher education: the foreign aid stage

As an early British colony and Commonwealth country, Australia originally transplanted the British higher education system. Before World War II, its higher education developed slowly and its academic level was low.After obtaining a bachelor's degree, students can only go overseas for graduate education and return to teaching or research after graduation.After the Second World War, Australia learned the lessons of the war, based on its geographical environment, cultural traditions and practical development needs, and gradually formed the two foreign policies of "friendly Britain and the United States" and "facing Asia". On the one hand, Australia relied on the United States to ensure its defense security and maintain the flesh and blood ties with the British Commonwealth. On the other hand, it actively conveyed goodwill to Asian countries and promoted its own country through economic cooperationDevelopment.In July 1951, Australia launched the Colombo Plan, which marked the first time that the Australian Government had formally become a direct advocate for foreign students in Australian higher education.[2] Through the "Colombo Plan", Australia exerted political and economic influence on recipient countries in Asia by means of financial assistance, technical cooperation, education and training, cultural publicity and other forms of assistance, so as to promote their economic development and strengthen their ability to resist communism.

Starting with the Colombo Plan, Australia has built a positive international image by nurturing talent for neighboring countries.As a milestone in the international development of Australian higher education, the Colombo Plan focuses on providing scholarships for students from developing countries, especially Southeast and South Asian countries, to study in Australia.Australia also has some self-funded international students during the aid phase.However, during the period from 1950 to 1974, due to the influence of Australia's "White Australia Policy", most international students had to obtain Australian university admission permit, apply for full-time students and prove that they could pay for courses and living needs before being accepted, so the number of self-funded students grew slowly [3].

Since 1976, especially after 1984, the federal government has allocated less budget for higher education, while the student size has been expanding, and the per capita education funding has been declining.In this context, the federal government began to adjust its international higher education policy.In 1979, the Australian government introduced the Overseas Stunt Charge, which began to charge non-government sponsored international students, with international students responsible for one-third of the cost of their education.In the early 1980s, when Australia's international trade was declining, the federal government borrowed from the British education policy and introduced a policy of full payment for international students.Since then, Australia's international higher education has basically shifted from the traditional aid policy to the trade policy, thus determining the market-oriented development model of higher education.

1.2 Time: 1980s to 1990s

The development of higher education internationalization: the stage of export industrialization in pursuit of economic benefits

Since 1985, Australian universities, in addition to academic standards, have no other restrictions on the admission of full self-funded international students, and this part of the international students' tuition fees are directly collected by the university.However, Australian universities cannot replace local Australian students and prejudice the rights and interests of local Australian students when recruiting international students.In 1986, the English Language Centre provided English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS).Some private universities started first, then various universities joined, and the trade-oriented education industry flourished rapidly [4].

In 1987, the Australian Department of Employment, Education and Training released A green Paper on Australian education, Higher Education: A Policy Discussion Paper, which suggested that fully funded international students would be a major source of revenue for universities.In 1988, the Federal government published the Higher Education White Paper "Higher Education: A Policy Statement", which opened the door to Dawkinson's higher education reform and became the

beginning of the market-oriented reform of Australian higher education.[5] The most significant feature of the modernization of higher education in this stage is the bold introduction of market-oriented means in higher education.The above documents show that the Australian government's attitude towards the internationalization of its higher education has changed from education aid to trade orientation, and reveal the next step in the development of the Australian government's international education trade - the gradual reduction of the original subsidy measures for international students.

At the same time, the Dawkinson reform abolished the dual-track system and established a unified national higher education system through the large-scale merger of higher education institutions. Since then, the Australian higher education system has been mandatory from the dual-track system to the single-track system.Then, through large-scale mergers of higher education institutions, unit teaching costs were reduced and higher education funding models were unified.The merger of universities has brought about a huge structural change in the form of higher education and universities in Australia, which has begun to transform from small-scale universities in the colonial era to American-style giant universities.

During this period, the modernization of Australian higher education showed a strong "marketization" characteristic, and the trend of "internationalization" became increasingly obvious.Dawkinson Reform has realized the market-oriented reform of public universities, and the market objectives and operation modes have a profound impact on the teaching and scientific research activities of universities. At the same time, the functions of higher education institutions tend to be unified, and the competitive funding mechanism enables the government to maximize the purpose of performance management in public education funding and promotes the modernization of higher education system.In addition, the Australian Federal Government has defined the position of Australian higher education in the global education market, and has taken advantage of the globalization process to implement the internationalization strategy of higher education for the global market.[6]

1.3 Time: 1990s to the present

This stage is the promotion of internationalization of higher education: from quantitative change to qualitative change to sustainable development stage.

Due to the excessive emphasis on the economic value brought by international students in the stage of export industrialization, the academic and educational significance of internationalization of higher education is weakened.The internationalization of Australian higher education after a decade of rapid expansion has made Australian higher education face major challenges in the 21st century.The government has begun to re-examine and establish the goal of internationalization of higher education, which urgently needs to improve the quality of higher education.The government has set up a dedicated agency and promoted the internationalization of Australian education through subsidies and legislation, paying more attention to the high quality and sustainable development of higher education, and promoting the multi-level development of higher education with quality improvement.In 2001, the government established the Australian University Quality Agency (AUQA), which is responsible for providing public quality assessment assurance for Australian universities, senior colleges, etc., to ensure that Australian higher education continues to provide quality services in the international market.In 2011, AUQA was replaced by the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA), which also assumed responsibility for the supervision of local government institutions in addition to its previous functions.In 2016, Australia developed the National Strategy for International Education 2015, which identified international education as one of the five growth areas in Australia's transition to a modern service economy, providing an unprecedented opportunity to meet the growing global demand for education services in Australia.In 2021, more than 42% of international students will be enrolled at established universities.Historically speaking, Australian international education is undergoing a transformation from the "single

economic development model of recruiting international students" to the "multi-faceted rational development model of internationalization of higher education".[7]

In the past 20 years, the internationalization of higher education in Australia has been a quality-seeking process of sustainable development with government, educational institutions and universities as the implementation subjects, the development of cross-border higher education international cooperation projects and education services as the carrier, and the delivery of high-quality higher education resources to the world with quality as the keyword.[8]

2. Characteristics of internationalization of Australian higher education

2.1 From serving political needs to serving economic development

Educational philosophy: The goal of higher education has shifted from being consistent with the national political goal to being compatible with the national economic development.

Reflecting on the historical development of the internationalization of Australian higher education, Dawkinson Reform is an important watershed in the internationalization of Australian higher education.Before the reform, higher education belonged to the public sector [9] and was a public product and the basic welfare of citizens. At this time, higher education assumed the responsibility of establishing a modern country and training modern citizens.The goals of this phase of higher education are aligned with the national political goals and serve the social reconstruction and cultural Renaissance of Australia.

After Dawkinson's reform, higher education began to develop into a quasi-public product, introducing market-oriented operation and cost transfer.At this time, higher education shouldered the responsibility to promote Australia's advantage in the global economic market, and the goal of higher education at this stage was more focused on serving the economic development of the country and promoting "economic reconstruction".[10] After entering the 21st century, higher education is more inclined to private products, that is, the benefits obtained by individuals through higher education are much higher than the public benefits, the economic value of higher education is becoming more prominent, and the proportion of private investment is close to or even higher than the public investment. At this time, higher education has taken on the important task of further competing for the international market of higher education and maintaining the original competitive advantages.At this stage, the goal of higher education emphasized more on the convergence with the national economy, and the mature international higher education industry became an important source of financial funds for colleges and universities.[11]

2.2 Strong quality assurance and supervision system

Strong quality assurance is essential to delivering a high quality student experience and maintaining Australia's reputation in international education.Australia has a comprehensive quality assurance system, with independent national regulators in basic education, higher education, vocational education and training and English language education, as well as state and territory-led regulators in schools.Australia's quality assurance and regulatory system is underpinned by legislation and built on strong partnerships between regulators, government, business and education providers.[12] In Australia, all educational institutions offering courses to international students are required to comply with the Guidelines for the Implementation of Education and Training Providers for Overseas Students, which have the force of law and effectively protect the rights of international students.

To achieve this goal, Australia will work with educational institutions through internal and external quality assurance mechanisms, continue to uphold the highest quality standards in the delivery of education and training, strengthen the quality of education, and lead and contribute to the development of an international quality assurance system for education.In order to ensure that the development of international education in Australia is protected and supported by law, the Australian

government has specially formulated the Educational Services for Overseas Students Act (ESOS Act).To make education services a sustainable brand for Australia's export education industry.More importantly, the government supports and encourages public and private universities to invest in non-profit international education projects, establish short-term exchange programs for students and teachers, and carry out research and cooperation projects with foreign universities, which promotes the internationalization degree and level of Australian universities.[13]

2.3 Always include international strategies as part of the Sustainable Development Goals

Based on a comprehensive understanding of domestic and international realities, extensive consultation with governments at all levels and other stakeholders, and in light of Australia's national conditions, the Federal Government of Australia has formulated the "Strategy 2025", which establishes three core objectives for the development of international education in the next decade:Create a world-class education system, build broad and deep partnerships, and provide the best study abroad experience in the world.Australia focuses on the diversity of its international student community and the sustainable development of its internationalization strategy.The target was first set out in the International Education Strategy 2025, with Australian Trade Commission Prime Minister John Anglet stating, "We welcome eligible Indian and Chinese students to study in Australia, but to expand the education market, the diversity of international student sources must be improved." [14]Australia has listed South American countries, mainly Brazil and Colombia, and West African countries as the first choice to expand the international education market.Second, Australia has established its Alumni Engagement Strategy as a public diplomacy priority to celebrate alumni achievements by creating networking exchanges that engage alumni from around the world and build sustainable cultural and economic relations between nations. Third, Australia pays attention to promoting its international education service industry to the world, and establishes education service and publicity agencies in the best places in foreign countries according to market research, so as to continuously expand the visibility and recognition of its higher education overseas.[15]

In view of the shrinking of the global international education market, affected by the epidemic, the overall demand for international education will shrink to a certain extent, in the face of the severe and complex international situation, on November 26, 2021, the country again released the "2021-2030 Australian International Education Strategy".[16] The strategy reflects Australia's four key priorities for international education - diversity, meeting Australia's skills needs, student-centricity, growth and global competitiveness.Through a collaborative approach between government and departments, we welcome international students back home and support the delivery of connected, innovative and caring international education for all students studying in Australia.The new strategy and the key initiatives to support its implementation will ensure Australia moves from recovery to long-term growth.[17]

3. The enlightenment of Australian higher education internationalization to our country

The modernization of higher education includes the high quality of higher education, the internationalization of higher education, the efficiency of higher education governance system and other elements, among which "the efficiency of higher education governance system" is the basis to support the modernization of higher education, "internationalization of higher education" is an important path to develop the modernization of higher education, and "high quality of higher education" is the guarantee to promote the modernization of higher education.[18] Although China's higher education modernization cannot completely imitate Australia, Australia, as the first echelon of higher education internationalization, still has a lot of lessons for us.

We must adhere to the government's leadership, establish the goal of international education, and establish specialized agencies responsible for international education and a quality certification system that is in line with international standards.Relevant departments should strengthen the

awareness of international education competition and international cooperation, strengthen the innovation, flexibility and universality of Chinese culture majors and curriculum Settings, and expand the international influence of China's higher education.[19]

Continuous improvement of the quality of education to study in China Education to study in China is an important part of China's international education, but also the focus of China's educational opening up in the new era.[20] .The establishment of specialized institutions responsible for the internationalization of education and the quality certification system in line with international standards is an important part of the development strategy of China's education internationalization.Through the agreement between countries, countries recognize each other's degree certificates or academic certificates, implement joint training, mutual recognition of credits, and create a new type of Chinese and foreign universities.

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