Research on the relationship between the development of regional economic society and vocational education

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Abstract: This paper analyzes the relationship between the development of regional economic society and vocational education, stresses that there exists an interactive relationship between them. On the one hand, the regional economic society offers a good opportunity for the development of vocational education, meanwhile, restricts its reform and development; on the other hand, vocational education will promote the development of regional economic society, and it influenced by many factors within this region.

Key words: vocational education; regional economy; interactive relationship

Vocational education plays a crucial role in the regional social and economic development, and its main aim is to meet the needs of the development of the social and economic development. While, as an important part of regional economic society, it can not be existing separately from the other factors of the regional economic society. All the component parts are an organic whole, and there is an organic and complex relationship among them, influencing and restricting each other, and acting together to promote the developments and reforms of the regional economic society.

1. Regional economic society restricts the development of vocational education

Vocational education exists in the environment of regional economic society, and its existence and development will rely on the exchange with the environment around, such as materials, energy and information. Therefore it is restricted by the environment of regional economic society.

1.1 The situation of regional economic society development will decide the size, level and structure of the development of vocational education

As the material base and conditions, the development of regional economic society decides the size and level of the development of vocational education. Because the funds, opportunities, means and objectives for people to receive vocational education and training will depend on its development situation.

The growth and optimization of structure of the regional economy decide the needs for vocational education, including its quality, quantity and structure, and therefore, lead to the interactive adjustments and upgrade of training goals and structures. Depending on the different development stages of the regional economic society, different needs for the size, quality and structure of vocational education are arisen. For example, in the earlier stage of regional economic development, more emphasis is generally on the development of industries, so there is a large command for non-skilled workforce and initial vocational education should be the priority for development.
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With the development of economic society and the industrialization, the need for high-skilled workers and high-level application-oriented professionals is increasing, and therefore, secondary and tertiary vocational education become the priorities of development. The general trend for the structure development of vocational education should always be from the training primarily of low-middle-skilled workers to the cultivation of high-level and high-skilled application-oriented professionals. So, an interactive circle is formed between them, that is: the development level and goals of regional economic society restricted the development goals and structure of vocational education.

The specialty structure of vocational education will depend on the industrial structure and its changes in this region. Different industry structures in different regions lead to various needs for types and structures of labor force, which affects the design and content of specialties. Changes in the structures of industry and employment promote the adjustments of specialty structures of vocational education, and with the decline of traditional industries and the decrease of the demand of human talents in those industries, related specialties in vocational education are shrinking; while, the rise of newly emerging industries and the active demand for professionals in those fields lead to the emergence of new specialties.

1.2 The system of regional economy decides the system and operation mechanism of vocational education

The system of regional economy decides the system and operation mechanism of vocational education, because reforms in economic system will surely provide impetus for the reforms of vocational education in terms of management system, training goals, specialty design, student distributaries and employment and so on. For example, the system of market economy requires that the inner management in vocational schools, school-running aims and student employment must be market-oriented. The situation of economic system decides the actuality of participation of the society in vocational education. Moreover, the priorities of regional economic plan will affect the priorities for the development of vocational education and its structural layout.

1.3 The environment of regional economic society will decide the exertion of functions of vocational education

The fully functioning of vocational educations will largely depend on the interaction and interrelation of all internal elements, but besides those internal elements, the functions of vocational education are also related with its external environment. All the functions are decided both by itself and the environment around it, and they are showed in the course of the interaction with the environment. Separated from this regional environment, vocational education will no longer have any significance.

2. Vocational education acts as a stimulus to the development of regional economic society

Generally speaking, the development of regional economic society depends on the material resources, natural resources and human resources, but fundamentally depends on the quality of the human resources in this region, that is to say the comprehensive abilities of the labor force. High quality labor force and rational human resources structure will be decisive factor for the development of the economy and the society. As an important channel for human resources development, vocational education is an effective means to foster practical and direct productivity and to solve employment. So, the size, quality and structure of vocational education will have a direct effect on the overall level of the development of the regional economy and the society. The functions performed by vocational education in promoting the development of the regional economic society are as follows:
2.1 Vocational education can promote the adjustment and upgrade of industrial structure of a region

The adjustment and upgrade of industrial structure have a close relationship with the structure of human resources. Optimization and upgrade of the industrial structure will be realizing and economic efficiency will be improved if they are in keeping with each other, if not, the upgrading of regional industrial structure will be hindered, which will result in unreasonable industrial structure and economic structure. Therefore, human resources structure is the foundation for the optimization and upgrade of the industrial structure, deciding the adjustment and upgrading of regional industrial structure.

At present, the shortage of the qualified persons with technical skills has become a major factor to hinder the upgrade of regional industrial structure in China. Promoting vocational education will be an effective way to solve this situation.

2.2 Vocational education will improve a region’s ability to absorb foreign investment

Investment environment is an important aspect which affects international enterprises or foreign investors to invest in a region, and also a decisive factor for a successful investment. Among all the elements in the investment environment, the availability of labor force is very important. Foreign investors place great emphasis on not only the availability of senior R&D, administrative talents, but also the availability of technical and skilled persons in this region. So, promoting vocational education will train and bring up hundreds of millions of high-qualified technical personnel, creating a talent environment to attract overseas investment.

2.3 Vocational education can reduce consumption of natural resources in the process of regional economic development and realize sustainable development

Taking a new-style road to industrialization and changing the style of economic growth are the inevitable choices of reducing consumption of natural resources and realizing sustainable growth, which must rely on the development of science and technology. Improving the quality and skill level of labor force through promoting vocational education will expedite the conversion, absorbing and innovation of science and technology. Meanwhile, the improvement of human resources abilities will overcome the law of descending marginal benefit in the traditional input of production factors effectively and in turn improve the ability of sustainable development.

2.4 Vocational education can improve people’s quality, upgrade consumption structure and expand market for the realization of industrialization

The improvement of people’s quality can be realized through formal education, adult education, in-service education and so on. And education one receives is positively related with his or her income. When educational level is improved, people are more likely to accept new technologies and new products, while people’s income level and their attitudes toward new technologies and new products are major factors to influence the upgrading of consumption structure. Therefore, promoting vocational education can improve people’s quality, upgrade consumption structure and expand market for the realization of industrialization.

3. Factors influencing the functioning of vocational education

3.1 Structure layout of investment in vocational education

Structure layout of investment to vocational education includes specialty structure and level structure of investment in vocational education. If the two can be mutually adapted, “internal effect” and “external effect” of accumulation of human resources will reinforce each other, which will help not only the accumulation of human
resources but also the economic growth; if not, parts of the investment in vocational education will become the cost for switch of specialties, thereby waste of resources is arisen. The level structure of vocational education will affect the effectiveness of educational investment. It should be in accordance with different development stages of regional economic society and technology structure in this region, otherwise its promotional effects on regional economic society will be restricted.

3.2 Institutional environment
The promotional effects of vocational education on the regional economic society will be restricted by institutional environment. Efficient institutional arrangement can promote vocational education to function most effectively, which is the greatest driving force and the significant guarantee for realizing rapid economic growth. There are two main features for efficient institutional arrangement: One is to make every member of the society receive opportunities of improving their qualities and competence, as well as freedom to develop their abilities; the other is to protect more effectively the achievement of all members of the society from productive activities. Therefore, the functioning of vocational education has close relationship with the institutional environment which includes allocation and incentive mechanism of human resources, equity mechanism of market opportunities, educational economic institution, and so on.

3.3 Growth of economy
Vocational education can promote the growth of regional economy, but if the economy in the region has not grown for a long term, the economic benefits brought by vocational education will surely go down. Economic stagnation and lower rate of growth means the scope of economic activities does not change in nature, and the requirements on labor force and their competences have deduced. In this sense, the functioning of vocational education on social economy is restricted, which implies that vocational education and economic development are mutually the condition as well as the promoter.

In short, there is an interactive relationship between vocational education and the development of regional economic society. When vocational education is in accordance with the needs of the development of the economic society, a mutually promotive and virtuous circle will be formed. Therefore, in order to promote the development of regional economic society, it is necessary to promote vocational education under the guidance of the scientific development concept and deal with the relationship among quantity, quality and structure in the course of development, making vocational education function well on the development of regional economic society.

References:

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