

Difficulties and Thinking of High-Quality Development of Private Higher Education in China in the New Period

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Improving the quality of education is the essential goal of promoting the development of education in China, and private colleges and universities, as an important part of China's higher education, also need to follow the development trend of the times and actively adjust their education mode in this process. Based on this, this paper firstly briefly analyzes the development status of private colleges and universities in China, and then sorts out the constraints existing in private colleges and universities, as well as the related optimized solutions. We look forward to feasible reference suggestions to promote the characteristic and high-quality development of private higher education businesses in China.

Keywords: new period, private colleges and universities, development difficulties, solutions

Introduction

The 2022 Government Work Report proposes to “support and regulate the development of private education”, “promote the connotative development of higher education”, and focuses on the basic logic and path of the development of higher education from “outreach” to “connotative” and then to “high quality”. Private colleges and universities are the main place to deliver quality talents to the society, and have developed for more than 40 years since the reform and opening up. However, as China enters the “new normal” development mode, the construction goal of the market economy gradually shifts from “growth rate” to “quality improvement”, so the demand for talent training also gradually changes. So it is necessary for private colleges and universities to objectively examine the current development deficiencies and adjust their focus appropriately so that they can successfully achieve the goal of high-quality development.

Development Status of Private Colleges and Universities in China

Since the official restoration of the college entrance examination system in 1977, the private higher education business in China began to gradually emerge, and with the national education reform and the continuous progress of technological development, began to show a trend of continuous development and growth. According to the *National Education Development Statistical Bulletin 2022* developed by the Ministry of Education, there are 2,560 general and adult institutes of higher education with 36.47 million students enrolled as of now. Among them, there are 734 private colleges and universities, accounting for 28.6% of the total number

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of colleges and universities nationwide, with 6.109 million students enrolled, an overall increase of 237,500 compared to the previous year, and 813 other private institutions of higher education, with 777,400 students registered in various categories (Yuan, Que, & Zhou, 2020).

Therefore, after decades of precipitation and development, the development scale of private higher education in China is expanding unprecedentedly, and with the support of national policies, a huge industrial chain has gradually emerged, which has become an indispensable part of China's higher education and is related to the training quality of new talents in China.

Difficulties of High-Quality Development of Private Higher Education in China in the New Period

Insufficient Degree of Integrated Development

China's Education Modernization 2035 proposes a strategy of "integrated development" for national higher education and describes a new pattern of joint participation of the whole society in education governance. From an overall perspective, the main connotation of this strategy is to emphasize the organic and moderate combination of social education subjects and give full play to their advantages to provide educational services. It is one of the fundamental ways to promote the high-quality development of national education. However, as far as the current actual situation is concerned, there is an obvious problem of poor system articulation in the process of integration and development of private colleges and universities, which not only do not form a stable docking channel with other educational mechanisms, but also do not fully introduce the support of social forces. Therefore, the quality of students' sources will be affected, and it will not be possible to accumulate high-quality educational resources, which will seriously affect the development quality of private colleges and universities (Zeng & Li, 2022).

Serious Homogeneity of Schooling

During the 14th Five-Year Plan, the government proposed specific tasks for higher education, such as "promoting classified management of higher education and comprehensive reform of higher education institutions to build a more diversified higher education system" and "classifying and building first-class universities and disciplines". Specifically, it means emphasizing private colleges and universities to fully reflect their characteristics and promote the further optimization of our talent structure. However, in the actual development process, private colleges and universities often blindly follow the standards of public colleges and universities in terms of school orientation, talent training mode, and discipline specialization settings, without fully combining school running experience and regional market environment to coalesce their brand characteristics. This has led to serious homogenization of teaching and learning, which is not conducive to the overall development of university institutions.

Teaching Emphasizing Results, But Neglecting Process

In recent years, with the comprehensive implementation of "New Engineering, New Medicine, New Agriculture and New Liberal Arts" construction and "Excellent Engineer Education and Training Plan 2.0, Excellent Doctor Education and Training Plan 2.0, Excellent Agriculture and Forestry Talents Education and Training Plan 2.0, Excellent Teacher Training Plan 2.0, Excellent Rule of Law Talents Education and Training Plan 2.0, Excellent Journalism and Communication Talents Education and Training Plan 2.0, and Top-Notch Students Training Plan 2.0" in the education system of colleges and universities, the comprehensive quality,

innovation ability, and practice level of students have become an important basis for testing the development quality of colleges and universities. However, there are some deviations in the understanding and implementation of talent training programs in some private colleges and universities, which lead them to focus on the result indicators such as employment rate, academic performance, and success rate of graduate school in the teaching process, but ignore the process factors of talent training, thus resulting in insufficient level of teaching construction, not precisely catering to the development goals of the new period (Li & Zhang, 2020).

Lack of Resources for Running Colleges and Universities

Most private colleges and universities have a significant lag in teaching resources compared to public schools. This is mainly in terms of faculty, funding, and even curriculum resources. The main reasons for this phenomenon are: The main source of funding for private colleges and universities is the tuition fee income, and private colleges and universities still do not get rid of the traditional single mode of “students pay tuition fees to support school development” in the process of development; it is difficult to obtain the same advantages of public schools in terms of public financial support, so private colleges and universities have certain pressure in the construction of talents and teaching resources, and it is difficult to meet their high-quality development needs.

Effective Methods to Promote the High-Quality Development of Private Higher Education in the New Period

Follow the Trend of the Times and Promote the Integration of Multiple Aspects of Teaching

Under the background of the new period, the talent training mode of private colleges and universities needs to follow the actual situation of the market demand side, and actively introduce the professional qualification standards, post demand standards, industry standards, and even technical standards of enterprises, so as to comprehensively adjust their education system to better fit the development trend of the times and realize the overall improvement of teaching quality of private colleges and universities. In this process, private colleges and universities need to take the initiative to connect with local governments, enterprises, and other institutions, actively understand the development trend of related industries, and adjust their curriculum structure, standards, and contents in many aspects, thus achieving the fundamental educational goal of “integrated development” and promote the overall improvement of the quality of private colleges and universities (Zhang, 2023).

For example, in terms of the school curriculum structure, the school personnel can understand the development trend and employment needs of relevant occupational positions through in-depth enterprise surveys, so as to rationally set up compulsory courses, subdisciplinary courses, comprehensive courses, and even elective courses to ensure that the ability system of the student system can be cultivated; secondly, in terms of curriculum standards, schools need to give full consideration to the levels and differences of practical jobs, and set a complete target framework according to the diverse development needs of students, so as to ensure that students can formulate a clear development route and better adapt to future jobs; finally, in terms of curriculum content, private colleges and universities need to pay attention to the problems existing in the real development of enterprises or industries, focus on the multiple development needs such as the national digital economy strategy and the “double carbon” goal, and train students’ professional and technical level. Ensure that it can effectively reflect the cutting-edge achievements in the subject field, and promote the comprehensive professional quality of students to be comprehensively improved, so as to promote the high-quality development of teaching.

Identify Their Development Positioning and Fully Reflect the Characteristics of Schooling

In the actual development process, private colleges and universities need to closely combine the actual situation to find out the orientation of teaching objectives, ensure that they can give full play to their advantages, and make adjustments in teaching content, specialty allocation, and personnel training objectives, so as to create a characteristic campus culture atmosphere and condense their teaching characteristics. Only in this way can the teaching level of private colleges and universities be improved effectively and the quality of their education be improved comprehensively.

For example, in the process of teaching, colleges and universities can set up a professional team of teachers to carry out social investigation activities at a fixed time every year, and understand the local market development trends, as well as the current industrial structure layout, so as to ensure that the professional curriculum system can be adjusted according to the development status of the regional economy; it can provide strong talent support for the local construction and development, and change the phenomenon of disconnection between the previous college training system and the production process of enterprises. On this basis, college teachers need to actively grasp the blank areas in technology, industry, and products in the current market, and carry out innovation and entrepreneurship education for students, so that students can not only improve their vocational skills in this process, but also carry out accurate talent output according to the local economic development strategy, which fully reflects the characteristics and value of running private colleges.

Optimize the Curriculum System Design to Highlight the Practical Teaching Elements

The college curriculum system is the basic link in the formulation of talent training programs, and also directly affects the degree of matching between the supply side of school talents and the market demand side. Therefore, under this background of the new period, private colleges and universities should not only adjust the curriculum allocation scheme by actively benchmarking the talent needs of enterprises, but also embody the process principle of talent training, and ensure the overall improvement of their talent training quality by formulating reasonable curriculum development plans (Duan, 2023).

For example, in the process of designing the curriculum system, colleges and universities can adopt the “supervision, guidance, evaluation, leadership” standard to formulate professional curriculum system in different levels, so as to ensure that students’ professional quality can be effectively improved in this process, and they can quickly adapt to various working environments after stepping to their posts in the future, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Criteria for Setting the “Supervision, Guidance, Evaluation and Leadership” Curriculum of Private Colleges and Universities

Levels	Theoretical system	Practice system
1	Basic knowledge	Training students’ learning skills according to professional knowledge, including information technology, experimental design, etc., so that students can acquire independent development abilities.
2	Professional basic courses	Taking the form of task decomposition, splitting the enterprise production and operation process into independent practical projects, and guiding students to combine knowledge to innovate, design, manage, transform, and finally solve practical problems.
3	Professional theory	Using project activities, skill competitions, experimental projects, and group discussions, students are guided to explore their professional theoretical knowledge and think in relation to practical problems that exist in the development of enterprises or industries.

Table 1 to be continued

4	Vocational education	Benchmarking the actual problems of transformation, development, and management of enterprises, guiding students to deeply understand the development direction of the industry and anchoring the current market gap to actively carry out innovative R&D.
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Strengthen the Deep Integration of Industry and Education and Expand the Sources of School Funding

Educational resources are the key premise to support the high-quality development of private colleges and universities. Therefore, in the new period, private colleges and universities can take the initiative to cooperate with enterprises to strengthen the construction of special talent cultivation modes such as “order-style classes” and “Champion classes”, so as to ensure the introduction of enterprise resources into college education from more levels and realize the seamless connection between the supply side and demand side of talents. On this basis, colleges and universities need to focus on strengthening the development of industry and education integration, through cooperation with social forces such as governments, enterprises, and financial institutions to further expand the source of school funding, and create ideal innovative and entrepreneurial scenarios for students. It enables students not only to improve their career level in this process, but also to share the results of higher education between enterprises and other social forces to achieve the common development goals of multiple parties.

Conclusion

To sum up, this paper has launched an in-depth reflection on the difficulties of high-quality development of private higher education in China in the context of the new period. It is emphasized that schools need to take the initiative to change their educational concepts in this process, while continuously expanding the range of educational services. It should ensure better talent development and long-term development.

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