The Historical Process and Experience of the Development of Vocational Undergraduate Education in China since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China

Shubing Cheng[1], Yiqian Lu[2]

[1]Jiangxi College of Foreign Studies, Nanchang, China

[2]Jiangxi Vocational and Technical College of Industry, Nanchang, China

*Corresponding author: csb0926@163.com

Abstract. In April 2021, General Secretary Xi Jinping made important instructions to the National Vocational Education Conference, emphasizing the steady development of vocational undergraduate education and the construction of a number of high-level vocational schools and majors, which provided fundamental guidelines for the high-quality development of vocational education at the undergraduate level in our country. The article combs the development process of my country's vocational undergraduate education since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, outlines its development status and characteristics, explores the valuable experience in the development of undergraduate-level vocational education, and provides guidance for realizing the vertical integration of the modern vocational education system and responding to the high demands of the people. The urgent need for quality education and high-quality employment is of great practical significance.

Keywords: Basic experience in the development of the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China.

1. The Current Status and Significance of Research on Vocational Undergraduate Education in China

1.1. Proposing the problem and its research significance

Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, China has vigorously implemented the strategy of revitalizing the country through science and education and strengthening the country through talent, continuously deepening education reform, focusing on modernization of education, accelerating the construction of a strong human resources country, and promoting a structural change in vocational education in China. The cause of vocational education has achieved historic achievements. The construction of the vocational education system is constantly improving, and the reform of vocational education teaching is comprehensively improving. The development level of vocational and technical education reflects the level of national economic development and educational modernization. [1] China has fully implemented the decisions and deployments of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council, established an education model that is suitable for economic and social development, and continuously opened and adjusted majors in response to market demand. The professional structure layout is more reasonable, and the professional settings are closely focused on the needs of national industrial development. This has cultivated national strategic talents and urgently needed talents to promote China's modernization process, and enhanced the support and contribution of vocational education to high-quality development, to continuously cultivate high-quality technical and skilled talents, great country craftsmen, and skilled craftsmen in order to achieve socialist modernization and become a strong country. [2]

1.2. Research Review

In recent years, vocational education in China has made significant progress. As a high-end form of vocational education, vocational undergraduate education has also received increasing attention

and research. Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, vocational undergraduate education in China has gone through several stages: proposal and pilot stage (2014-2018): During this period, the Ministry of Education approved some local universities to carry out pilot work on the construction of applied technology higher education institutions, opening up the exploration path of vocational undergraduate education. Comprehensive Development and Deepening Reform Stage (2018 present): With the support and encouragement of national policies, vocational undergraduate education has entered a period of rapid development. During this period, the Ministry of Education approved several vocational colleges to upgrade to vocational undergraduate schools, and at the same time, a number of vocational undergraduate majors were established. Mainly because the government has increased policy support for vocational undergraduate education. For example, in terms of enrollment, the number of enrollment plans for vocational undergraduate schools has been increased; In terms of school settings, support for vocational undergraduate education has been increased. These policies provide strong support for the development of vocational undergraduate education. At present, vocational undergraduate education in China has formed diversified forms of education. In addition to the traditional four-year vocational education, there are also different forms of vocational education, such as two-year vocational education, five-year consistent vocational education, and comprehensive training through middle and undergraduate education. The diversified forms of education provide students with more opportunities for choice. At the same time, vocational undergraduate education emphasizes the close integration with industry demand. Each university offers professional courses according to market demand, hires enterprise mentors to teach, organizes students to intern and practice in enterprises, etc., improves students' practical operation ability and employment competitiveness, ensures that the educational positioning of adhering to the attributes of vocational education remains unchanged, cultivating high-quality technical and skilled talents remains unchanged, and the educational model of school enterprise cooperation and integration of industry and education remains unchanged.

2. The Historical Process of the Development of Vocational Undergraduate Education in China

2.1. Proposal and Pilot Stage of Vocational Undergraduate Education (2014-2018)

Policy foresight leads and fills the key "one link". In June 2014, the State Council's Decision on Accelerating the Development of Modern Vocational Education proposed for the first time the exploration and development of undergraduate level vocational education. In October 2015, the Action Plan for Innovative Development of Higher Vocational Education (2015-2018) further proposed the exploration of undergraduate level vocational education implementation forms and training models that are different from subject oriented talent cultivation. During this period, provinces such as Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Shandong, and Henan took the lead and accumulated a lot of experience in joint and integrated training of vocational education undergraduate talents through cooperation projects such as "4+0" and "3+2" between vocational colleges and ordinary undergraduate universities. By January 2019, the National Vocational Education Reform Implementation Plan officially proposed the pilot program for undergraduate level vocational education, and vocational undergraduate education obtained the "admission certificate". [3] In this year, the Ministry of Education approved 22 vocational colleges to upgrade to vocational undergraduate schools, launched pilot programs for undergraduate level vocational education, broke the "ceiling" of vocational education at the vocational level, and filled the "key link" of China's modern vocational education system. [4]

2.1.1 Policy background: The country's strong support and promotion of vocational education

Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, vocational education in China has firmly grasped the historical opportunity of major reform and development, and embarked on a rapid development path of consolidating the foundation, filling the gaps, strengthening weak areas,

and leveraging advantages. The landscape of vocational education has undergone a structural change. Vocational education provides talent and skill support for a skilled society, which is indispensable and irreplaceable. [5] However, for a long time, vocational education has been regarded as secondary education, and this intangible "ceiling" hinders the improvement of the social status of technical and skilled talents, and has also become a shackle to the development of vocational education. In order to reverse this situation, the Party and the state have successively introduced policies to optimize the type positioning of vocational education. [6] In 2021, the General Office of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and the General Office of the State Council issued the "Opinions on Promoting the High Quality Development of Modern Vocational Education", further improving the top-level design of the "Vocational Education College Entrance Examination", and proposing that by 2025, the modern vocational education system will be basically completed, and the enrollment scale of vocational undergraduate education will not be less than 10% of the enrollment scale of higher vocational education.

2.1.2 Pilot situation: Pilot work of vocational undergraduate education carried out in some provinces and cities

Among them, the emergence and steady development of vocational undergraduate education are rooted in this. Policy guidance, interactive innovation, breaking the "ceiling" of vocational education to meet social needs, and promoting the transformation and development of vocational education. Vocational education is closely linked to economic and social development, and every major change and development is in line with the pace of the times. In the early stages of reform and opening up, the Chinese economy began to grow rapidly, and a group of short-term vocational universities emerged; In the early 21st century, China's accession to the WTO and the rise of Made in China promoted the great development of vocational education; Entering a new era, with the deepening evolution of a new round of technological revolution and industrial transformation, vocational undergraduate education has been "nurtured" and "born". Therefore, multiple rounds of changes in vocational education are inevitable results of the upgrading of external economic and social development needs.

2.2. The Comprehensive Development and Deepening Reform Stage of Vocational Undergraduate Education (2018 Present)

Since 2014, the State Council has held a national conference on vocational education and issued the Decision on Accelerating the Development of Modern Vocational Education; After the 2018 National Education Conference, the State Council issued the "Implementation Plan for National Vocational Education Reform" (referred to as the "20 Articles of Vocational Education"), which pointed out that "vocational education and general education are two different types of education with equal importance"; In 2021, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council will hold a national vocational education conference, proposing the concept and strategy of building a skilled society. Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, vocational education in China has firmly grasped the historical opportunity of major reform and development, and embarked on a rapid development path of consolidating the foundation, filling the gaps, strengthening weak areas, and leveraging advantages. The landscape of vocational education has undergone a structural change. Vocational education provides talent and skill support for a skilled society, which is indispensable and irreplaceable. In 2021, the General Office of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and the General Office of the State Council issued the "Opinions on Promoting the High Quality Development of Modern Vocational Education", further improving the top-level design of the "Vocational Education College Entrance Examination", and proposing that by 2025, the modern vocational education system will be basically completed, and the enrollment scale of vocational undergraduate education will not be less than 10% of the enrollment scale of higher vocational education.

2.2.1 Policy background: Requirements and expectations for vocational education in the new era

With the arrival of the new era, China's economy and society have undergone historic changes and achieved historic achievements, which provide enormous demand and solid conditions for the development of vocational education. More than 70% of the newly added frontline employees in fields such as modern manufacturing, strategic emerging industries, and modern service industries come from vocational colleges. The implementation of the vocational education college entrance examination system has provided vocational school students with more opportunities to enhance their technical skills through further education. At the same time, measures such as vocational education integration, integration of education and training, and credit banking have been implemented to broaden the path for students to succeed.In addition, the construction of vocational education undergraduate programs has broken the "ceiling" of vocational education that is stagnant at the vocational level. The deepening of industry education integration and school enterprise cooperation has enhanced the adaptability of vocational education, forming a vivid situation of vocational education coexisting with regional industries and resonating with the same frequency. This situation enables the coordinated development of general education, vocational education, higher education, and continuing education, forming a new pattern of diversified, open, and integrated vocational education.

2.2.2 Development situation: The rapid development and expansion of enrollment scale of vocational undergraduate education in various provinces and cities

In recent years, with the rapid development of China's economy and society, the demand for high-quality technical and skilled personnel has become increasingly urgent. In order to meet this demand, the country has increased its support for vocational education and promoted the establishment and development of a number of undergraduate vocational colleges. These schools aim to cultivate high-quality technical and skilled talents, focusing on practical teaching and skill training, and have made important contributions to local economic development and social progress. In various provinces and cities, the development of vocational undergraduate education has also received strong support. The government has introduced a series of policy measures to encourage social forces such as enterprises and industry associations to participate in vocational education, forming a diversified educational pattern. At the same time, various provinces and cities have actively promoted the integration of industry and education, school enterprise cooperation, and built a number of practical bases and training centers, providing students with a more practical learning environment. Expanding enrollment scale is also one of the important aspects of the development of vocational undergraduate education. With the continuous improvement of people's understanding of vocational education, more and more people are paying attention to vocational undergraduate education. Therefore, provinces and cities are continuously increasing their enrollment promotion efforts, expanding the scope and quantity of school enrollment, and providing more people with the opportunity to receive high-quality vocational undergraduate education. [8]

3. The Experience and Inspiration of the Development of Vocational Undergraduate Education in China

3.1. Policy support is an important guarantee for the development of vocational undergraduate education

3.1.1. The government attaches great importance to and supports vocational undergraduate education, and has issued relevant policies and documents

We are living in a rapidly changing era, where the global economy is constantly changing, and technological innovation is leading the progress of various industries. In this process, vocational undergraduate education plays a crucial role. It is not only a product of socio-economic development,

but also an important force driving social progress. In recent years, the Chinese government has increasingly attached importance to and supported vocational undergraduate education, which is not only reflected in the issuance of policy documents, but also in our daily lives. In the Decision on Accelerating the Development of Modern Vocational Education, the State Council clearly pointed out that "vocational undergraduate education is an important component of higher education and an important way to cultivate high-level technical and skilled talents." This decision gives vocational undergraduate education a clear positioning and also indicates the government's attention and support for vocational undergraduate education. The Guiding Opinions on Promoting the Pilot Work of First Class Vocational Undergraduate Education jointly issued by the Ministry of Education and other departments further emphasize the importance of vocational undergraduate education. This guidance proposes the goal of building first-class vocational undergraduate education and provides specific implementation measures. This not only points out the direction for the development of vocational undergraduate education, but also provides strong policy support.

The introduction of these policy documents undoubtedly provides strong guarantees for the development of vocational undergraduate education. They not only clarify the status of vocational undergraduate education, but also propose development goals, providing a solid policy foundation for the sustainable development of vocational undergraduate education. However, the introduction of policies is only the first step, and the key lies in how to implement them. In this regard, the government has also made positive efforts. For example, the government has increased investment in vocational undergraduate education, encouraged enterprises to participate in vocational undergraduate education, promoted the integration of industry and education, and made vocational undergraduate education more in line with practical needs.

3.1.2. Local governments actively respond and strengthen investment and management in vocational undergraduate education

In recent years, with the development of social economy and the adjustment of industrial structure, vocational undergraduate education has received increasing attention in various regions. Local governments actively respond by strengthening investment and management in vocational undergraduate education, in order to adapt to this situation, promote the development of vocational education, and cultivate more high-quality skilled talents for society. Firstly, strengthening investment in vocational undergraduate education can enhance the overall level of vocational education. In many places, the development of vocational undergraduate education still faces many difficulties, such as funding shortages, insufficient teaching staff, and slow equipment updates. If the government can increase investment, these problems can be effectively solved, improve the conditions for vocational undergraduate education, and enhance the quality of vocational education. Secondly, strengthening investment in vocational undergraduate education can better meet the demand for talent in society. With the development of the economy and the adjustment of industrial structure, the demand for skilled talents in society is becoming increasingly urgent. Vocational undergraduate education is established to cultivate high-quality skilled talents. If the government can strengthen investment and management in vocational undergraduate education, it can better meet the demand for talent in society and promote economic development. Finally, strengthening investment and management in vocational undergraduate education can promote the reform and development of vocational education. In many places, vocational education still faces many problems, such as outdated educational concepts, single teaching methods, and unreasonable curriculum settings. If the government can strengthen investment and management in vocational undergraduate education, it can promote the reform and development of vocational education, innovate educational concepts and methods, and improve the adaptability and competitiveness of vocational education.

3.2. School enterprise cooperation is an important way for vocational undergraduate education

3.2.1. Cooperation between enterprises and universities to jointly cultivate high-quality technical and skilled talents

In today's rapidly developing society, talent cultivation needs to keep up with the pace of the times and meet the needs of enterprises and society. For vocational undergraduate education, collaborating with enterprises to cultivate high-quality technical and skilled talents has become an indispensable and important way. Firstly, school enterprise cooperation can provide more practical educational content. Enterprises directly participate in the talent cultivation process, introducing practical work scenarios, the latest technologies and processes into teaching, making the teaching content more practical, practical, and targeted. Such educational content can better help students master practical work skills and improve their employment competitiveness. Secondly, school enterprise cooperation can provide more practical opportunities. During their school years, students can be exposed to the actual working environment of enterprises for internships and practical experiences. This not only helps them apply theoretical knowledge to practice, but also cultivates their professional ethics and comprehensive abilities. These practical experiences are very helpful for students to find jobs and adapt to job positions after graduation. Once again, school enterprise cooperation can achieve resource sharing and complementary advantages. Enterprises have rich practical experience and advanced equipment technology, while universities have abundant teaching resources and research capabilities. Through school enterprise cooperation, enterprises can leverage the teaching and research resources of universities to enhance the quality and ability of employees. Universities can also leverage the practical experience and technical equipment of enterprises to improve teaching quality and research level. Finally, school enterprise cooperation can promote deep communication and cooperation between enterprises and universities. Through cooperation, enterprises can better understand the talent cultivation situation and scientific research progress of universities, and universities can also better understand the needs and future development direction of enterprises. This kind of deep communication and cooperation helps to promote the common development of enterprises and universities.

3.2.2. Establish a mechanism for industry education integration and collaborative education to improve the quality of talent cultivation

With the rapid development of technology and economic globalization, the importance of vocational undergraduate education is increasingly prominent. However, traditional education models often struggle to meet the talent needs of enterprises and the market. In order to solve this contradiction, school enterprise cooperation - an innovative and practical education model - has become an important way for vocational undergraduate education. School enterprise cooperation is a unique model that combines the actual needs of enterprises with the theoretical education of schools by establishing a mechanism of industry education integration and collaborative education. This model emphasizes the unity of practice and theory, which can help students understand and master theoretical knowledge in practical operations, thereby improving their work ability and comprehensive quality. Firstly, school enterprise cooperation helps to improve the quality of talent cultivation. Through cooperation with enterprises, schools can more accurately grasp the demand for talent in the market, adjust curriculum and teaching content, and cultivate talents that better meet market expectations. Meanwhile, during their internship in enterprises, students can be exposed to practical work environments and accumulate practical experience, which undoubtedly enhances their employment competitiveness. Secondly, school enterprise cooperation also helps to enhance teachers' practical teaching abilities. By collaborating with enterprises, teachers can learn about the latest developments in the industry and the actual needs of enterprises, thereby adjusting their teaching methods and content. This can not only improve the quality of teaching for teachers, but also contribute to enhancing their professional competence. In addition, school enterprise cooperation is also beneficial for the development of enterprises themselves. Through cooperation with schools,

enterprises can obtain a stable supply of talents and also leverage the scientific research capabilities of schools for technological innovation. This will undoubtedly enhance the competitiveness of enterprises and promote their development.

3.3. Improving social recognition is an important goal of vocational undergraduate education

3.3.1 Improve social awareness and recognition of vocational undergraduate education through various means

Enhancing the awareness and recognition of vocational undergraduate education in society is crucial, as it not only helps to enhance the social status of vocational undergraduate education, but also provides more development opportunities for students and promotes overall social progress. Firstly, we need to clarify that vocational undergraduate education is not a "inferior" form of education. On the contrary, it is a highly targeted and practical form of education aimed at providing students with practical skills and knowledge to help them better adapt to and meet social needs. Therefore, we should improve society's awareness and recognition of vocational undergraduate education through various means. One is that the government, educational institutions, and related industries should unite and promote vocational undergraduate education through various channels. For example, promotion can be carried out through traditional media such as television, radio, and newspapers, as well as through emerging media such as the internet. At the same time, various promotional activities, exhibitions, forums, and other means can be held to help more people understand the advantages and characteristics of vocational undergraduate education. The second is that the quality of vocational undergraduate education is the key to improving social recognition. Therefore, educational institutions should strengthen the management and control of teaching quality to ensure that students can receive high-quality education. At the same time, educational institutions should actively cooperate with employers such as enterprises to jointly develop talent training programs to meet social needs. The third is to demonstrate the advantages and value of vocational undergraduate education through examples of outstanding graduates. For example, graduates who have achieved outstanding results in various industries can be invited back to school to share their experiences and feelings, so that more people can understand the practical application value of vocational undergraduate education. The fourth is to improve the social recognition of vocational undergraduate education and establish corresponding certification systems. For example, industry experts and scholars can be invited to form a certification committee to evaluate and certify vocational undergraduate education institutions. Certified vocational undergraduate education institutions can gain more social recognition and trust.

3.3.2 Strengthen publicity and education to enable more people to understand the advantages and characteristics of vocational undergraduate education

In the vast world of education, vocational undergraduate education is undoubtedly a brilliant gem. It integrates the practicality of vocational education and the theoretical nature of undergraduate education, providing a strong background and broad platform for students' career development. However, cognition and understanding often require time and patience, and more importantly, our active promotion and in-depth education. Vocational undergraduate education, unlike traditional academic undergraduate education, focuses more on the cultivation of practical and applied abilities. Here, students not only learn theoretical knowledge, but also prepare in advance for their future career through practical operations. Vocational undergraduate education closely integrates education and practice, enabling graduates to better adapt to social needs and quickly engage in work. In addition, vocational undergraduate education has clear professionalism and industry specificity. It is employment oriented, closely aligned with industry needs, and formulates teaching outlines and curriculum settings. This enables graduates to possess a high level of industry knowledge and skills to provide professional services in specific fields. At the same time, vocational undergraduate education emphasizes the cultivation of teamwork and communication skills, enabling students to better integrate into teams and realize personal value in future work. However, in order for more

people to understand and receive vocational undergraduate education, we need more extensive and in-depth publicity and education. Firstly, we should strengthen the social awareness of vocational undergraduate education. Through various channels such as media, the internet, and campus activities, more people can understand the existence and value of vocational undergraduate education. Secondly, improve the transparency of vocational undergraduate education. Let more people know about its curriculum, teaching philosophy, and employment situation, so as to make wise choices. At the same time, we also need to guide and change the traditional public perception of vocational education. Many people may think that vocational education is a suboptimal choice, but in fact, vocational undergraduate education provides another option, a more practical one. We need to make everyone understand that no matter which path we choose, as long as we work hard, we can achieve our own values and dreams.

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