Systemic Study on Local Undergraduate University Teachers’ Training Offered by Enterprises under New Normal Economy

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Abstract. Under Chinese new normal economy, and with the diversities of individual universities having different positions in the whole educational landscape, local undergraduate universities face issues on how to develop themselves in terms of their respective conditions. This article gives a brief introduction to Chinese new normal economy from past, current, and future perspectives, and then analyzes the practice status quo of local undergraduate universities associated with enterprises, identifies some issues, including weak awareness of teachers participating in practice, facial show of school’s management and supervision, and inertia of the enterprise practice without distinctive characteristics of local undergraduate universities. According to the aforementioned, the paper puts forward the corresponding measures from three dimensions: government, university, and firm.

1 Introduction

New normal economy refers to the restoration process from recession to re-prosperity in economy. When the economic situation dramatically changes, it will exert a profound impact on education. Local undergraduate universities are part of the whole education and naturally will respond to the economic changes. Local undergraduate universities always bear the basic responsibilities to transfer talents, especially practice-oriented students, to all kinds of organizations. So, it is somewhat urgent that the higher schools conduct immediate research pertaining to the economic changes and the social requirements. And the local undergraduate universities can provide more high-quality and needy graduates for companies, governments, and other organizations.

2 Analysis of Basic Background about Practices

2.1 Analysis of educational background about practices

The Ministry of Education, the National Development and Reform Commission, and the Ministry of Finance jointly issued a guideline on directing local common undergraduate schools to transform into practical models in Oct., 2015. Then The ministry of education itself issued a file numbered Jiaofa 3 of 2017, themed “proposal of higher school’s configuration of work during the period of the 13rd Five planning by the Ministry”. Later, the same authority issued another document named “the advice of how to implement the planning 2.0 about training excellent teachers by the Ministry” in 2018 and it demands that plenty of and rich practical courses be established and empirical teaching system be perfected through the whole training process. The Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council released the modernization of China’s education 2035 in Feb., 2019[1]. This file guides how to modernize China’s education, and concerns the cultivation of higher school teachers and cares about the transformation of local higher schools according to their positions and localities of regional economic and scientific characteristics. Many local undergraduate schools will transform or have been transforming themselves into practice-oriented ones according to the administrative strategies.
Teachers go to enterprises to practice, which satisfies the need of transformation. When the teachers command the empirical, urgent and trendy needs companies and the corresponding industries will be and are in, the higher schools can provide more targeted courses, and hence offer more high-quality and satisfying students for firms and other organizations.

2.2 Analysis of new normal economic background

China is entering a new era of economic development. The novel term New Normal is first put forth by the Pacific Investment Management Firm after the financial crisis in 2008, expressing the restoration process from recession to re-prosperity. Bloomberg Businessweek published an article themed “China has a ‘New Normal’”, explaining the new normal of China’s economy quoted as saying then Chinese president Jiang Zemin. Jiang depicted China’s new normal economy from three dimensions, including speed, structure and driver at the 2014 APEC business leaders summit. He thought that China’s economy would grow moderately rather than rapidly, that economic structure would be optimized and upgraded continually, and that the driver would be innovation instead of traditional production factors and pure investment since then. The same year, the Central Economic Work Meeting summarized some traits of this kind of new normal economy from nine perspectives, including consumption demand, investment, export and international balance of payment, productive forces and industry organization, relative strengths of production factors, features of competitive market, environmental constraints, financial risks and solutions, and allocation modes of resources & macro control. The meeting first reckoned that personalized and diversified consumption would replace massively surging consumption, and then that traditional industries would become saturated and hence infrastructure inter-connectivity along with new technology, new products, new sectors and new business models would utter significantly. The same meeting thought that our country’s low-cost comparative advantage had changed, exemplified by the simultaneous occurrence of high-level import and large-scale export. It also acknowledged that new industries, services and micro enterprises would play a bigger role, and production be smaller, smarter and more specialized. The consensus reached was that population dividend gradually diminished with the reduction of rural people surplus and people aging, thereby economic growth drivers need shift to high-quality human power and the advancement of technology. Likewise, market competitiveness more depended upon products or services of high quality and differentiation and what’s more, the market landscape becomes more and more orderly and transparent. When it came to the environment constraints, our traditional development mode exerted huge pressure on the vulnerable ecology to the extreme, so it was necessary that new economic growth mode exploit green, low-carbon and recyclable science and technology. As far as the appropriate solution to economic risk was concerned, the focus was on lowering financial leverage, removing foam appearing in related fields and adopting comprehensive measures, including curing the itching problems and treating the grounding root, in a bid to shape sound and solid mechanism. At last, the meeting concluded that market mechanism should play a significant role in the allocation of scare resources.

3 Analysis of Training Situations of Teachers of Local Undergraduate Schools offered by Enterprise

3.1 Weak awareness of teachers participating in practice offered by enterprises

On one hand, the enterprises to be chosen are not enough and the whole practicing process is insipid in some way; on the other hand, lack of galvanizing mechanism is the itching point in the long run. Many teaches go to practice into an enterprise just for promotion or professional titles, not for improving themselves for future teaching. And some teachers cannot put down their dignity to the first front-line or workshop. The condition always becomes more complicated with the enterprise’s training goal inharmonious with the teacher’s or ignorance of management, which may cause the teacher to just cope with the training project, and even not to practice, but stay home or do private things in the training name. Obviously, this discredits the higher school.
3.2 Show of school’s management and supervision

Prior to a company training, the teacher should first submit an application form to the dean’s office, meanwhile registered with the personnel division. Passing through a series of checks and supervision, the teacher will go practicing. Some schools demand that their teachers practicing in an enterprise write work-log and fill in the daily time sheet by the enterprise. After the complete training project, the enterprise will present evaluation concerning the teacher to the school, and the teacher will write the summary about this training program, proposing the possible revision of the original teaching schema. Generally speaking, the teaching program often regulates the time when training will be conducted, the content that details practice activities, the methods the teachers can use, the responsible unit or leadership that will supervise the practicing program, and the appraisal that guarantees the expected results of good beginning and good ending. However, sometimes it is the fact that forms overtake practicing content, even neglecting the inherent spirit in the training. This misunderstanding and malfunction of the enterprise training especially prevail in arts disciplines. For some theoretical and industrial major disciplines, the corresponding teachers may do some administrative work instead of professional work, which may be useful to expand teachers’ vision and thinking, but helpless to enrich their specialty. If the teachers can not enhance their profession, they will feel such practices less valuable, and thus reduce their enthusiasm to go practicing. So, the responsible unit and leaders care about not only the procedures, but also the training pertinence, which will be great conducive to the future teaching and the teachers’ career development.

3.3 Inertia of the enterprise

The enterprise often shows a sluggish attitude toward the teacher’s practice. There may be three reasons that the enterprise doesn’t actively take part in the training program. The first reason is that the enterprise pays more attention to its economic benefits than to the possible practice burden. The second reason is that the rotation of posts may disturb the normal performance. So, even when the teacher has mastered a post and hope to shift to another post, the enterprise always doesn’t want to satisfy the teacher’s need. The last one is that every enterprise has its own core data concerning its crucial benefits, and it doesn’t want to share them for confidentiality. This will bring about the fact that the teacher is hard to get right or necessary training because of the enterprise’s retention of the information. The above mentioned reasons will ultimately lead to a kind of failure in the training, although it appears to be successful, which shows that the enterprise’s final evaluation with a legitimate seal to the teacher is excellent. As a result, this much deviates from the original track of practice.

3.4 Practice without distinctive characteristics of local undergraduate universities

Many local undergraduate universities don’t conduct an investigation in detail, including what specialties to be considered in priority and why, and what kinds of enterprises preferential or suitable. Many kinds of practicing lack distinctive characteristics of local undergraduate higher schools. In other words, these kinds of training are not distinguished with comprehensive, special or vocational higher schools. Generally speaking, local undergraduate universities have different traits with other higher schools. They face application and mostly offer talents for regions and localities, while the comprehensive always face both application and theory and bear the responsibility to conduct vital theoretic research and other tasks. In other words, the graduates from the comprehensive universities needn’t immediately indulge themselves into the front line of production, marketing, finance and so on for quick output. They can be placed on some important positions for long-term benefits. They are used as cadres. In contrast, the vocational are always hoped to devote themselves to the front line quickly and make a profit for the enterprises instantly. They are used as workers. The local undergraduate universities’ role is just between them. The graduates from them can work soon and can have some research ability. They can be used as both
cadres and common workers when necessary. Apart from the possible different roles in an enterprise, the local undergraduate universities mainly provide graduates for the regional and local areas vis-a-vis national areas, so the higher school always open specialties fit for regions and localities. Hence, if the local undergraduate universities do scientific research, they always center around local development and emergency. However, when the schools select enterprises to practice, they rarely think about their goals, positions and missions in the whole educational landscape. Of course, the schools have practical difficulties, mainly due to the scarcity of companies who are willing to provide practice opportunities for teachers.

4 Measures Against the Above Issues

In order to deal with these three key issues well, the government, the higher schools and the firms should make joint efforts.

4.1 From the government’s perspective

The government has two basic functions: management and service. Since both the local undergraduate universities and the enterprises locate at the region the government administers, the government has the responsibilities to manage, coordinate and serve the two entities. Apart from funding the normal development of the local higher schools, the government should try to play its role in cooperation and coordination between the enterprises and schools[3]. The government can offer higher schools special funds to assist the training programs pertaining to enterprises. Meanwhile, it can implement tax cut or monetary support under the national or regional laws for the enterprises that are sincerely willing to provide training posts to teachers. What the government does will not be in vain. When the local undergraduate universities become more powerful, they can provide more excellent graduates or talents to local government agencies, firms and other organizations, which will be greatly beneficial to the local economic and social development. The kind of development is just one part of highly political performance, possibly driving the relevant leaders to promote or gain an achievement or mission sense. Surely, when the local and regional economy performs well, the government always gains high prestige and massive support and praise from the grass roots, which is also one part to the rejuvenation of our national dream in some way.

4.2 From the schools’ perspective

The reason why the higher schools exist is that they cultivate talents for society and conduct scientific research for the progress of the nation and the world. Providing suitable talents is one important function of higher schools. Of course, the local undergraduate schools have special tasks in this regard. It should offer application-oriented talents for regions or nations, as well as conduct less research compared with nationwide, comprehensive universities such as Tsinghua University, Peking University and Shandong University. The schools should pay more attention to application than to basic theory due to their positions in the whole educational landscape. Some entrepreneurial experts say that graduates from local and regional higher schools are no less competitive than those from comprehensive universities in the front-line of production, marketing, finance and many other fields. In order to keep their unique advantages in the front-line, it is necessary for local undergraduate schools to increase the practice portion of the curricula[4]. What’s more, the schools should trace the fastest growing areas, including big data, artificial intelligence, industrial robot, new energy automobile, etc. Since the schools understand the importance of practice, it is necessary for them to make policies encouraging their teachers to go practicing. The policies should really reward those that seriously go practicing, fund those that spend lots of time, energy and even money to practice, and praise those that overcome difficulties to be trained in rapidly developed fields. When a teacher is appraised for the promotion of the professional title, the one who goes practicing should be considered proactively. Just now, the school-teacher relations are discussed. The school-enterprise ties are important, too. The schools should prioritize the transfer of graduates to
the enterprises that offer training chances. The schools provide convenience and help those enterprises recruit suitable and excellent graduates, making them feel a good return for their pay.

4.3 From the enterprise’ perspective

Under the relevant laws and policies by the government, it is a duty for the enterprise to offer an excellent practicing platform for higher schools and their teachers in some way. In other words, the enterprise is to make money as its own main goal, but it should bear its corresponding social responsibilities. So, offering such a training platform is just one of its social responsibilities. If all enterprises just hope to garner graduates in a short, plain and fast way, it ultimately does harm to the enterprises themselves in return. So, far-sighting enterprises should actively and sincerely provide suitable posts to right teachers to train them, and meantime they can offer the tough frontier and empirical issues to the teachers for common research. Of course, when the enterprises get some benefits from the government, such as tax cut, monetary assistance and others, they should take into account the government’s pay and its difficulties. After all, the government is all enterprises’ government. In return, the enterprises can first obtain excellent graduates and if possible, can share the training equipment and other resources the higher schools possess.

5 Summary

Under the new normal of China’s economy, the local undergraduate schools should shift to application-oriented ones to serve well the development of regional economy and the structural optimization of industries. When the teachers go practicing, they can boost higher schools’ transformation. This article tries to design a training system to make the government, the university and the enterprise work together well to achieve the original goal, avoiding the possible or potential inefficient and ineffective form just for sake of pure training. The authors hope that it can give an inspiration to relevant participants and decision-makers. Likewise, the authors deeply recognize their limit knowledge and insufficient know-how, and thereby the article may not be helpful for some organizations under certain circumstances. It is more feasible to selectively apply some ideas, according to the goal, current conditions, and applicable resources including talents, technology, finance, etc..

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