

Analysis of Promoting Educational Modernization from the Perspective of Public Policies

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Abstract:

Higher education reform is the core area in cultural reform, a critical step in political and social reforms. Over the past 40 years of reform and opening-up, higher education reform presents the following features: The reform of the higher education management system acts as the lead, the implementation of the teachers' appointment and assessment system as the main thread, and the reform of plan for high-level talents and income distribution system as important means. The higher education reform has gone through three stages including initial reform within society, overall reform as a national strategy and global talents-oriented reform. The basic logic of the reform is that ideological theories takes the lead, strategic guidelines setting a tone, policies and measures forming the basis, on which various institutions function properly and benefit from it. In view of effectiveness, the reform generally is coordinated and operated in an orderly way, but there are some weaknesses at the decision-making level. Consensus on reform is lacking, the top-level design is not strict, standards and differences are not clear, and division of each stage is not explicit and impacts are not far-reaching. Meanwhile, at the implementation level, policy supports and detailed designs are needed in terms of favorable academic environment, talents assessment, coverage of funding support, and mechanisms that integrate the efforts of enterprises, universities and research institutes, etc. The center of higher education reform in the new era is to optimize the internal governance structure in colleges and universities and stimulate the vitality of all talents,

especially “ten relationships” that ought to be properly handled. For these, a top-level design must be formulated upon national conditions, adapting to the trend, drawing on the collective wisdom of personnel from the higher education sector and beyond, making steady progress in a stable and balanced manner.

Keywords: *40 years of reform and opening-up, Chinese higher education, Reform, Review, Reflection, Prospect.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Ever since China embarked on the economic reform in 1978, its cultural, political, social and ecological reforms have also been on the way. Being the core area of cultural reform, higher education reform also plays an important role in political and social reforms. Higher education institutions are crucial vehicles to deliver higher education. In such context, higher education management system takes the university personnel system as its core, in which the talents appointment and assessment systems have a critical place. Thus, the motive and the ultimate goal for the higher education reform are to fully mobilize initiative and creativity of talents in higher education institutions. In other words, the success of the higher education reform depends on the reform of human resources, in particular, on the reform of talents assessment system in higher education institutions. The key to carrying out China’s plan of constructing world first-class universities and first-class disciplines (referred to as Double First-Class initiative) relies on developing first-class faculties and on the success of higher education reform.

In recent years, relevant researches upon higher education reform gradually has shifted from the traditional path of “policies as the major concern” to the individual or collective case study of reform of university personnel system, or studying and learning from experiences of other top higher education institutions. However, some problems still exist in previous researches. When education reforms are being discussed, we more or less rely too much on individual case study “at micro level” or collective case study “at macro level” to assess the losses and gains of those reforms. Thus, researches about the whole system and the general pattern are sometimes neglected. Undoubtedly, academic research should adapt to the development of the whole society, but if we are to adjust the scope of research, reflections on perspectives and paths of previous researches, especially management competence, as well as performance evaluation for education authorities are worthy of in-depth discussion.

This paper is an empirical study upon the higher education reform in the past 40 years of

reform and opening-up, in terms of its evolution, key features, manifestation, management and policies at different stages. Meanwhile, the paper also explores the upper limit of the higher education reform in China to avoid shortsightedness in future reform, thus constructing a theoretical outline of higher education reform featuring the mutual-promoted “from national will to university action” in the face of a great change unseen in a century.

Under the context of Double First-Class initiative, in higher education the supply-side reform centers on the reform of teacher’s appointment and assessment mechanisms. The key to realize Double First-Class initiative is to introduce and gather international high-level talents. Education authorities should help universities and colleges adjust their talent training, development and assessment systems to meet the demands of Supply-Side reform and Double First-Class initiative. Starting from the reform practices, we could gradually construct the theoretical basis and framework of higher education reform, providing experience and reference for the reform in the new era.

II. RETROSPECT OF HIGHER EDUCATION REFORM SINCE REFORM AND OPENING-UP

By sorting out programmatic documents of higher education reform in the 40 years of reform and opening-up as well as their core philosophies in chronological order, we could summarize the features of higher education reform: The reform of the higher education management system acts as the lead, the implementation of teacher’s appointment and assessment systems as the main thread, and the reform of plan for high-level talents and income distribution system as important means. Since 1978, higher education reform in China has experienced three stages, including initial reform within society, overall reform as a national strategy and global talents-oriented reform.

2.1 Initial Reform within Society (1978-1999)

At the beginning of reform and opening-up, with a society waiting to be revitalized, the main task was to restore the training system for high-level talents rapidly. Responding to the demands of economic reform and social development, higher education reform at that time prioritized a series of reform measures to cultivate eligible talents for the economic and social development.

2.1.1 Reform of the higher education management system: enhance school-running autonomy and attach great importance to key universities

In May, 1985, the First National Conference on Education Work announced the Resolution on Reform of the Educational System and proposed to “enhance school-running autonomy of colleges and universities”, marking the beginning of a new round of reform for the higher education management system ^[1].

On February 13, 1993, Outline of China’s Education Reform and Development was put forward, advocating that we should “work hard to construct around 100 national key universities and colleges and a batch of key disciplines and majors”, later known as Project 211 ^[2].

On May 4, 1998, then president Jiang Zemin pointed out at the 100th anniversary of Peking University that “to achieve modernization, China should be home to numerous world-class and top-level universities”. On December, 24, 1998, the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Finance published the Action Scheme for Invigorating Education Towards the 21st Century, later known as Project 985 ^[3].

2.1.2 Reform of appointment and assessment systems: construct systems for classified assessment and relevant laws and regulations

On November 27, 1979, the Provisional Regulations on the Duties and Assessment of Teachers in Colleges and Universities published by the Ministry of Education proposed that teachers should be assessed in terms of their ideology and political performance, professional skill and actual achievements ^[4].

In 1986, the Trial Regulations on Teacher Positions in Institutions of Higher Learning launched by central leading group for professional title reform stipulated that “the professional titles of teachers include teaching assistant, lecturer, associate professor and professor. The teacher holding a post shall be appointed or employed with explicit duties, requirements and tenure of office for the post”^[5].

The Teachers Law taking effect on January 1, 1994, clarified that the state shall “institute a system of professional titles for teachers and schools” and “other institutions of education shall gradually institute a system of appointment for teachers”^[6].

The Higher Education Law of the People’s Republic of China adopted on January 1, 1999, specified qualifications, duties, appointments and other basic systems for teachers in higher education institutions ^[7].

2.1.3 Reform of plan for high-level talents and income distribution system: corresponding departments to set up talents program

In 1994, Chinese Academy of Sciences carried out the Hundred Talents Program, prioritizing demands of disciplines and assessing faculties appropriately and scientifically.

In 1998, Ministry of Education put forward Chang Jiang Scholars Program, breaking the tradition of talents tied down by one hiring body and life-long tenure, rather, implementing the mechanism of paying on position and excellent pay for high quality work.

2.2 Overall Reform as a National Strategy (2000-2011)

On June 11, 2002, the government formulated and issued a national plan of action to develop a quality workforce (2002-2005), proposing implementing “the strategy of reinvigorating China through education and talents” for the first time. In 2003, from December 19 to 20, the first national work meeting on human resources was held and called for the comprehensive implementation of the above-mentioned strategy. China’s higher education gradually entered the stage of national level, an unprecedented height, thus it has become a driving force for developing a talent pool and invigorating China through science and education.

2.2.1 Reform of the higher education management system: formulate plan for medium and long-term education development and collaborative innovation

On July 13, 2010, after the first national conference on education work in the new century, the government issued the Outline of China’s National Plan for Medium and Long-Term Education Reform and Development (2010-2020), and pointed out that we should work on the basis of constructing key disciplines and continue to implement the Project 985 and Project 211^[8].

On March 23, 2012, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Finance issued the Opinions on Implementing the Program to Enhance Innovation Capacity of Higher Education Institutions, commonly known as the Plan 2011^[9].

2.2.2 Reform of appointment and assessment system: explore classified appointment and management

On June 2, 2000, the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security and the Ministry of

Education jointly issued the Opinions on Deepening Reform of the Personnel System in Higher Education Institutions, which emphasized that the appointment of teachers should change from management featuring fixed position without much talent flow to the post- and performance-oriented management ^[10].

On July 6, 2002, the government forwarded Opinions on Trial Implementation of Personnel Employment System in Public Institutions issued by the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security.

On May 7, 2007, the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security and Ministry of Education jointly issued the Guiding Opinions on the Management of Post Setting in Higher Education Institutions. It clearly pointed out that higher education institutions should actively explore classified management of teachers in accordance with their main duties, including setting teaching-oriented, teaching-research and research-oriented positions ^[11].

2.2.3 Reform of plan for high-level talents and income distribution system: deepen wage system reform and launch a talent-introduction plan

In 1985, the wage system reform was implemented. Independent operating mechanisms were established to separate wage reform for state organs and public institutions (including universities and colleges) from that for corporates ^[12].

In 1993, the wage system was reformed again. The basic wage system of faculty members in institutions of high learning was implemented with reference to the Reform Plan of Wage System for Personnel of Public Institution, initiating the reform of the internal distribution system and setting off a wave of wage system reform in universities and colleges ^[13].

In 1999, Several Opinions on Deepening Reform of System for Distribution of Personnel in Higher Education Institutions emphasized that we should comprehensively implement appointment system for teachers, administrative staff and other workers in universities and colleges, realizing the transition from management featuring fixed position without much talent flow to the post- and performance-oriented management ^[14].

In 2006, the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security, Ministry of Finance, and Ministry of Education issued the Scheme for Reform of the Income Distribution System for Staff of Public Institutions to implement a nationwide wage system reform characterized by job performance ^[15].

2.3 Global Talents-Oriented Reform (2012-2018)

Multi-level policies have been put in place to build a highland of talent, with the goal to make China the world highland of talent through institutional advantages, marking the higher education reform's entering into the third stage, global talents-oriented reform.

2.3.1 Reform of the higher education management system: formulate and implement Double First-Class initiative

On November 5, 2015, the government issued the Overall Plan for Coordinately Advancing the Construction of World First-class Universities and First-class Disciplines, which proposed to coordinate and promote the construction of world first-class universities and first-class disciplines, commonly known as Double First-Class initiative. In order to accelerate the construction of the initiative, the government has successively introduced relevant implementation measures.

On January 24, 2017, the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Finance and National Development and Reform Commission jointly promulgated the Implementation Measures for Promoting the Construction of World First-Class Universities and First-Class Disciplines (Interim).

On September 21, 2017, the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Finance, and National Development and Reform Commission jointly issued the Notice on Announcement of the List of Universities and Disciplines for World First-Class Universities and First-Class Disciplines Construction. On August 8, 2018, the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Finance and National Development and Reform Commission issued the Guiding Opinions on Accelerating the Construction of the World First-Class Universities and First-Class Disciplines in Higher Education Institutions^[16].

2.3.2 Reform of appointment and assessment system: deepen the reform of classified management and assessment for teachers

On March 16, 2012, the Several Opinions by the Ministry of Education on Comprehensively Improving the Quality of Higher Education (2012) issued by the Ministry of Education proposed to improve the classified management and assessment for teachers in colleges and universities, and to formulate different methods of appointment, training, promotion, assessment, rewarding and punishment.

On May 15, 2014, the government announced the Regulation on Management of Personnel in Public Institutions, which is the first administrative regulation that systematically regulated management and employment of personnel in public institutions.

On March 5, 2014, the Guiding Opinions on Deepening the Pilot Reform of the Professional Title System proposed that the professional title evaluation system should be established and improved on the basis of annual evaluation, adhering to the principles of combining daily and regular observation, qualitative and quantitative assessment.

On March 21, 2016, the government announced the Opinions on Deepening the Reform of the System and Mechanism for Talent Development which clearly stated that classified evaluation for talents should focus on making classified policies. So as to avoid the phenomenon that management and evaluation methods for government leaders are directly used to evaluate academic leaders and professionals in research institutions. Meanwhile, talent evaluation mechanisms should be upgraded to highlight ethics ^[17].

On August 2, 2016, the Ministry of Education issued the Guiding Opinions on Deepening the Reform of Assessment System for Teachers in Colleges and Universities, which pointed out that we should remove the system and mechanism barriers restricting the development of teachers in higher education institutions, and inspire the vitality for teacher's imparting knowledge and cultivating people, conducting research, and making innovation and business start-up ^[18].

On January 20, 2018, the government issued the Opinions on Comprehensively Deepening the Reform of Teaching Staff Construction in the New Era, which pointed out that we should ensure implementation of the fundamental task of fostering virtue in education, and following the regular pattern of education and that of teacher's development.

On February 26, 2018, the government published the Guiding Opinions on Promoting the Reform of Classified Talent Evaluation Mechanism to accelerate the reform of talent evaluation and improve management and service system for the talent evaluation. So as to build a talent evaluation system compatible with the construction of a socialist system with Chinese characteristics.

On November 7, 2018, the General Office of Ministry of Education issued the Notice on Carrying out the Special Action to Clean up Five Academic Preferences, in other words, to avoid the tendency of preferring academic papers, honors, professional titles, diplomas and awards over actual contributions.

The above policy documents constitute the top-level design and fundamental guidelines of the reform of the appointment and assessment mechanisms for teachers in colleges and universities.

2.3.3 Reform of plan for high-level talents and income distribution system: systematically implement projects to cultivate talents and reform retirement and pension system

On August 17, 2012, the government took the lead in implementing National Special Support Plan for High-level Talents. The goal is to select and cultivate domestically about 10,000 outstanding talents, leading talents and top-notch young talents in natural sciences, engineering technology, philosophy and social sciences in 10 years, and offer them special funding support.

In January 2015, the government issued the Decision on Reform of Pension Insurance for Staff of State Organs and Public Institutions, and the government forwarding the notice of the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security and the Ministry of Finance on Three Implementation Plans for Adjusting Basic Wage Standards for Staff and Increasing Retirement Wage for Retired Staff of State Organs and Public Institutions, announcing that reform of pension insurance for staff of state organs and public institutions would start from October 1, 2015.

In March of the same year, the government issued the Measures for the Occupational Annuities of State Organs and Public Institutions. Still in March, the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security and Ministry of Finance issued the Notice on the Implementation of the Decision on Reform of Pension Insurance for Staff of State Organs and Public Institutions.

These documents demonstrate the government's efforts to realize, first, a unified and standard pension insurance system, meanwhile, a unified talent market. Market mechanisms should be improved to mend fragmented system and balance the price. Then, to optimize distribution of human resources and fully mobilize employment mechanism. However, those measures might lead to some negative impacts. First, state organs and public institutions will be less attractive for talents. Then, competition among graduates from universities and colleges will be intensified regionally. Moreover, there are problems to be solved, like access to local social security system with coordination at both the provincial and the national level as well as coordinated redistribution of pension insurance fund. A scientific salary system based on social security system should be set up, at the same time, corresponding supporting systems, including commercial insurance and welfare for employees, should also be established.

Above all, higher education reform in the past 40 years is in line with the national strategy, with constant change and development. The governance philosophies and methods demonstrate its clear feature of integrating inheriting the past experience and putting forward new ideas, as the mind-set and practice of the government always keep pace with social development. Strategies for development of higher education reform have been established, a comparatively complete policy system has been formed, and fruitful results have been achieved. These provide strong support for China's rapid growth, showing the tendency of theories, strategic layout, policies and systems developing in an all-round way, exerting broad and far-reaching-impact on economic and social development.

III. REFLECTION ON HIGHER EDUCATION REFORM SINCE REFORM AND OPENING-UP

Higher education reform in the 40 years of reform and opening-up is in general coordinated and operated in an orderly way, with each step cooperating well. This could be observed from the fact that China now boasts the largest scale of higher education in the world. But there are some weaknesses in decision-making and implementation. First, the policy system is not coordinated enough at the decision-making level, which means consensus on reform is lacking, top-level design is not strict, standards and differences are not clear, and division of each stage is not explicit and impacts are not far-reaching. Meanwhile, at the implementation level, policy supports and detailed designs are needed in terms of favorable academic environment, talents assessment, funding support, mechanisms that integrate the efforts of enterprises, universities and research institutes, etc.

First and foremost, in the case of policy-making, more emphasis is laid on how to recruit talents than on how to develop and tap into their potential. A large proportion of policies are related to the introduction of talents, mainly focusing on research funding, housing grants and other benefits. However, for high-level talents, the most important appeal is to create a soft environment conducive to research and business start-ups. Some local authorities, colleges and universities have noticed this problem and discussed about it, but no further progress has been seen.

Secondly, policies to attract talents are increasingly homogenized. Most local authorities and universities have failed to formulate tailored talent policies on the basis of their regional development. As a result, the imbalanced flow of talents gives rise to a larger wealth gap among talents, which in turn affects the balanced development of the region. Moreover, the imbalanced flow and gathering of talents might lead to a waste of human resources.

Thirdly, inclusiveness needs to be improved. The lack of overall coordination among policies has resulted in the overlapping of honors and benefits for some talents, squeezing the development space of others. The phenomenon of emphasizing titles and neglecting actual performance is pretty common. Recently, the widely criticized phenomenon, “hats” of honors and titles eagerly wanted everywhere, actually reflects problems existing in the evaluation system, especially the weakness in talent evaluation. Talents should be considered under certain contexts. Top-notch talents can be seen as the “top” only at the right time, right position, and right environment.

Fourthly, the shortage of mechanisms to combine the efforts of enterprises, universities and research institutes. Talents specialized in high-tech sectors returning to China to start businesses will generally choose places with better research support. Thus, research and development platforms and human resources play decisive roles. At present, entrepreneurs look for research and development platforms and manage human resources on their own, which are exhausting and the results are difficult to guarantee. But there are few measures to tackle this problem. In view of this, suggestions are proposed in the reflection as follows.

3.1 To Have Consensus on the Higher Education Reform

Authorities in charge of reform participate in the reform themselves, and the collective action will in turn benefit the participants. The philosophy of personnel system reform is based on the consensus of the responsible authorities. Extensive policy research upon higher education reform in campus and faculty representative assembly system are the foundation for forming right concepts and consensus on reform. The policy should be formulated on the basis of decisions made by academic organizations made up of professors. Meanwhile, several important consensuses on reform that should be formed are shown as follows.

The first consensus is that rules should be set for talents waiting to be cultivated and flexibility for geniuses, not only respecting differences in individual competences, but also emphasizing that the personnel system should provide the corresponding evaluation system and resource allocation system for talents with varied competences. The second is that professors are of pivotal importance in a university and a university should be an academic community. This emphasizes that professors should take academic research as their core competence, and internalize the public interest of universities into their academic self-discipline.

The third is to cultivate students with patience and high-quality education. This reflects that undergraduate teaching is attached with great importance, emphasizes that high-quality

teaching is the internal requirement for teachers, and shows the respect for teachers and the affirmation of teachers' contributions. The fourth is to strictly follow the rules. Only when the rules are followed could the current university system be practically implemented, through which it is possible to represent and protect the interests of the majority in the university.

3.2 To Have a Top-Level Design

A reform inevitably influences the vested interests. Therefore, the reform has to eliminate aspects lagging behind and set up new ones, and it must be considered systematically and designed out of the whole structure. The focus of the personnel system reform is development of faculties.

On the one hand, national policies are to be integrated into the cultivation plan for students in colleges and universities. On the other hand, universities must formulate effective cultivation plans following the pattern of students' growth and development, thus tapping the full potential of all talented people. The salary system is an important respect of the personnel system reform. To build systematic talent evaluation and salary incentive mechanisms, we must establish a supporting system with clear framework and great inclusiveness.

3.3 To Standardize and Take Differences into Account

Respecting differences is the prerequisite for higher education reform. Huang Daren, former president of Sun Yat-sen University believes that the essence of university management is differentiated management ^[19].

To achieve differentiated development, we must set up differentiated evaluation and reward standards. Then, evaluation mechanisms for representative achievements should be fully implemented, in which the guiding standards are formulated upon specific disciplines and detailed standards are set up according to characteristics of each college and university.

The form of representative achievements should conform to the characteristics of corresponding disciplines. They could be high-level academic papers, monographs, authorized patents, policy consultation reports, etc., or proof of citation index and evaluation, proof of policy consultation reports being adopted, the achievement being applied and economic benefits being generated, and award certificates. The representative achievements should fully reflect the applicant's systematic and innovative performances.

The academic review process should be improved while the right of academic review is to

be exercised by academic experts. The academic evaluation shall be conducted by departments in colleges and universities to avoid experts being evaluated by laymen. Schools and departments are responsible for inspecting teachers' working ethic, and the advisory committee on teaching and learning conducts teaching assessment. Meanwhile, peer evaluation by high-level academic experts outside the school should also be considered.

3.4 To Carry out Reform in Explicit Stages and to Have Far-Reaching Impacts

Due to the uncertainty of the returns of reforms, a Pareto Improvement strategy must be adopted. The "one size fits all" approach is not suitable for higher education reform. Instead, it must be carried out in stages and steps on the basis of successful experience of pilot projects. According to statistics, China outperformed other countries in terms of policy change in higher education reform, from the Project 211 in 1993 to the Project 985 in 1998, to the plan for collaborative innovation in 2011, and to Double First-Class initiative launched in 2015.

The Ministry of Education clearly stated that the Double First-Class initiative is not a replica of the Project 211 and the Project 985. But in less than 20 years, at least four major reforms of macro policy for higher education have been implemented, and one new major reform implemented in less than 5 years. In such case, colleges and universities in various regions have to make dramatic adjustments in their development strategies. Moreover, world first-class universities often attach great importance to the sustainability of policies for higher education. Their teaching plans, assessment systems, and promotion systems are all sustainable. Although some policies are slightly adjusted, they rarely make major adjustments to the forementioned policies.

In short, whenever there is a reform, there will be problems. Clarifying background of those problems, their development and the approaches to solve them are of vital importance to further grasp the pattern and trend of the personnel system reform in the context of higher education.

IV. PROSPECT OF THE THEORETICAL OUTLINE OF HIGHER EDUCATION REFORM IN THE NEW ERA

The center of higher education reform is to optimize the internal governance structure in colleges and universities and stimulate the vitality of all talents. Talent evaluating and motivating are the core of the reform of the personnel system in higher education institutions as well as the prerequisite for the development and utilization of human resources. Thus, the recruitment and assessment of talents in colleges and universities should be strengthened. It is said that the system could not make people smart, but it could make lazy people diligent. In this

sense, the key to higher education reform lies in the effect of the reform and innovation of the talent appointment and evaluation system in colleges and universities.

However, weaknesses still exist in the reform of the personnel system in colleges and universities. To name some of them, classified evaluation is in need, evaluation methods and evaluation standard lacking variety, evaluation rarely referring to social skill certificates, and autonomy of employer is not fully implemented ^[20]. In the important period of strategic opportunity for construction of Double First-Class initiative and high-level universities in China, we must properly handle the “ten relationships” in higher education reform. They are teaching and research, talents in “hat” of titles and talents with intrinsic competence, individuals and teams, commonality and individuality, qualitative and quantitative assessment, short-term and long-term assessment, quality and quantity, virtue and talent, stock and increment, stability and mobility, regulation and freedom, incentive and support, etc.

4.1 Teaching and Research

Equal importance should be attached to teaching and research, and the tendency of excessive emphasis on research to the neglect of teaching ought to be reversed. The relation between research and teaching is like that between source and water. Research is the “source of knowledge” which will be used in teaching. Without the support of research, teaching in colleges or universities will lose its “soul” ^[21]. Teaching and student cultivation are primary tasks of higher education. The establishment of sound teaching evaluation standards and a system for professors to teach undergraduates marks teachers’ return to their original duty of imparting knowledge ^[22].

It has been proven that teachers with a higher level of research competence will have deeper thinking about teaching and have a more accurate grasp of knowledge, making it easier to give in-depth explanation in teaching. Teaching is the “invisible driving force” for research. It could become a strong impetus for research, realizing the “interactive connection” between teaching and research. Therefore, it is necessary to reform the methods of teacher assessment in which teaching performance is highlighted, establishing incentive and competition mechanisms and a salary distribution policy inclined to teaching practices. Thus, the tendency of excessive emphasis on research to the neglect of teaching might be completely reversed.

4.2 Talents in “Hat” of Titles and Talents with Intrinsic Competence

Equal importance should be attached to talents with “hat” of titles and talents with intrinsic competence, with preference to talents both with intrinsic competence and honorable “hat” of titles. The fact that talents are awarded “hat” of titles itself has contained the connotation of

survival of the fittest. In this sense, such talents are rare and valuable. However, this does not mean that when evaluating talents, we only judge them from whether they have honors or titles; instead, solid learning, actual contributions and development potential of talents would also be taken into account. Thus, we must advocate for more social capitals to be invested into the establishment of charity funds for talent development, so that talents' titles could be classified and less over-emphasized and a third-party evaluation system might be introduced.

4.3 Individuals and Teams

Individuals and teams should be integrated, with focus on team evaluation. A philosopher was once asked, how to prevent a drop of water drying up? He said, "just put it in the sea"^[23]. This reveals the relation between individuals and teams. Evaluation of talent team in colleges and universities is newly-emerged and complex. Those talents as individuals and other talents should support each other, and the relationship between individuals and talent teams is like fish and water, which cannot be separated.

Therefore, we must establish an evaluation system for individual and team development with real-time monitoring, and construct special zones for talents, realizing unified standards for team and individual assessment. For key talent teams, they would be given the autonomy of talent selection and evaluation. The university or college should participate in evaluating the team while the team evaluates the individuals, with more attention to the role of the individual in the team.

4.4 Commonality and Individuality

Both commonality and individuality should be emphasized with more inspection of individuality. Commonality and individuality are the essence of everything. So, it is necessary to strengthen the evaluation of the commonalities of talents, highlighting the inspection of individuality. For teachers from different disciplines, we should adopt different methods of performance evaluation and design varied assistance plans for them according to their levels and ages, to ensure that all teachers have tailored development possibility and goals.

4.5 Quantitative and Qualitative Assessment

The combination of quantitative and qualitative assessment should be adhered to with qualitative assessment to be strengthened. Both of them belong to comparative analysis. Qualitative analysis looks at the nature of a substance or event while quantitative analysis is a quantity-based comparative analysis. Some results of university teaching, research and social

services could be quantified, but some not. At present, subjective and one-sided qualitative analyses still exist in the indicators of talent evaluation. It is clearly improper to rely on subjective feelings and impressions in evaluation. Thus, when formulating quantitative indicators, we must be practical and reasonable, but don't simply look at quantity of results, so as to ensure the effectiveness of teachers' teaching and research. We should also make evaluation standards clear. Quantitative evaluation could directly reflect explicit work in digital forms, which is conducive to comparison. For results that are difficult to quantify, qualitative evaluation could be applied to make the evaluation more scientific.

4.6 Short-term and Long-Term Assessment

Long-term and short-term assessment should be coordinated with a focus on long-term assessment, the collection of short-term ones. Measuring research achievements with those achieved in a short-term will encourage an impetuous academic tendency. The research achievements of different disciplines have different methods, time periods and cycles. In particular, it is difficult to compare humanities and engineering disciplines. It is impossible and unreasonable to evaluate achievements of human science in the same way as that for natural science. Because teachers of varied characteristics and ages have their own features, experiences, potential and growth cycles, so do the tasks they undertake in teaching, research, social services, cultural heritage innovation and international exchanges. Thus, the evaluation period, method and the standard for them should not be the same.

4.7 Stock and Increment

Equal emphasis should be laid on the balanced development of existing talents and newly recruited talents. The newly introduced talents enjoy high pay and satisfying conditions with relaxed or even no assessment, worsening the already existing imbalance among talents. More and more introduced talents parachute in while existing ones seek promotion. Talent titles should not be the only tool to access better pay, conditions and resources. Policies are needed to set upper limits to salary of high-level talents and lower limits for existing talents so as to appropriately extend the salary scale. Under this premise, with the policy of setting big goals for excellent pay and conditions, we then lay less emphasis on titles of introduced talents, strengthening assessment and evaluation for them, while improve policies for supporting and developing existing talents.

4.8 Stability and Mobility

Both stability and mobility should be stressed to explore increasing mobility of teachers in a

rational and orderly manner. Efforts have been made in teacher's selection and resignation mechanisms, which could be proved by some practices. For example, the "promote or leave" policy, a management method is implemented by some colleges and universities to improve the overall quality of teaching staff. Tsinghua University started to implement it in 1996 while Peking University and Sun Yat-sen University in 2002. However, this policy often encounters great obstacles. Because teachers sometimes might not agree with and adapt to such arrangements, they have varied understandings about the rules and regulations. And evaluations of teachers more often focused on teaching workload rather than their academic achievements.

4.9 Regulations and Freedom

Regulations and freedom should go hand in hand to ensure that teachers could explore in-depth knowledge freely and orderly. Strict regulations will inevitably affect some people's "freedom of being on the loose". But we know that a relaxed environment is needed for pioneering researches and innovative achievements. The essence of research is to have academic freedom. On this basis, colleges and universities should not have too many requirements for every teacher's academic planning. Meanwhile, basic regulations of personnel management should be personalized to give scholars more freedom. The word university derives from "universe", indicating that university should be tolerant, providing different talents with enough freedom, which is also the essence of universe.

4.10 Supports and Incentives

Supports and incentives should complement each other to ensure that teachers are committed to teaching and research without distraction. If their welfare or conditions and basic income could not guarantee a "decent" life, incentives will not be implemented fairly, and the income discrepancy will be widened, which would in turn affect teachers' professional self-identity. On the other hand, if incentives are lacking and the salary system could not reflect incentive measures comprehensively in terms of the distribution method, teachers and researchers would not be highly motivated.

In the new era, the higher education reform is actually confronted with many difficulties. Relevant policies for procedures of foreign talents' retirement in China are still under discussion. The problem has also undermined overseas high-level talents' determination and confidence to work full-time in China and slowed down universities' going global. The supporting policies for livelihood and service of overseas high-level talents are relatively comprehensive, while those for domestic high-level talents are still waiting to be improved.

Thus, more efforts should be made in classified management of talents to ensure that all talents have sound development space and career prospects. It is necessary to create conditions, build a public development platform, provide fair opportunities for development and improve relevant rules and regulations. In promotion of professional titles and project application, training and further studies, professional expertise of each type of talents should be taken into account, so as to ensure that all talents are fully developed. In this respect, relevant functional departments need to further negotiate and complete supporting policies.

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Higher education reform integrates systems, talents and the corresponding environments harmoniously. Only by combining the relative rationality of systems with the subjective initiative of talents could we promote the sound development of the institutions. The dialectical relations among systems, talents and the environments lie in the evolution and interaction of the three elements, leading to spiraling up of the institutions, or a downward spiral. A good system and environment could transform people, so the higher education reform should start with the reform of talent appointment and evaluation mechanisms. In accordance with the new development philosophy and spirit, talent policies should be strengthened in the following aspects:

First of all, be innovation-driven. Through the reforms like classified evaluation of talents, we could improve capabilities of innovation in knowledge-based areas as well as in science and technology. Secondly, be more coordinated. The communication and coordination among central and local authorities, institutions, colleges and universities, corporates, funds, projects and programs, etc. in terms of the layout of major projects, and coordination of resource allocations at macro level are areas to be strengthened in formulating talent policies in the future. By providing our talents with great conditions, we could attract more talents from afar. In this respect, policies and specifications in optimizing development environment for talents need to be strengthened. Thirdly, be less materialistic. Excessive desire for wealth and material possessions is contrary to the development of talents and may pollute their growth environment. In the future, talent policies should make efforts to eliminate materialism. Fourthly, be more open. Upon experience accumulated in over 40 years of opening up to the outside world, we should make use of our institutional advantages to set up a world talent highland and build cultural confidence. Not only can our people, technology, education, and economy go global, but our culture can be spread across the world. As for talent flow, there is a trend from brain drain to talents introduction to circulation of talents, and thus talent policies should also follow this trend, adjusting the strategic orientation continuously. Lastly, fully share human resources. High-level talents are national resources, so in the new era, it is

an important issue to avoid high-level talents' flowing to ill-suited posts and being gathered without fully developing their potential so that the whole society can benefit from their achievements.

The basic logic of higher education reform in the 40 years of reform and opening-up lies in ideological theories taking the lead, strategic guidelines setting a tone, policies and measures forming the basis, on which various institutions function properly and benefit from it. In the early stage of reform and opening-up, In order to be revitalized, China set the goal of socialist modernization. Because talents played a key role in social development, respect for talents became a consensus and China's higher education reform was oriented to meet the demands of economic and social development, and a series of reform were carried out. At the beginning of the 21st century, as China was firmly resolved in implementing the strategy of invigorating the country through science and education and the strategy on developing a quality workforce, a large number of high-level talents are in urgent need. Therefore, introducing talents plays a dominant part in policies, and policies encouraging innovation and entrepreneurship become the mainstream.

The higher education reform in the past 40 years has not been smooth sailing, but a spiral under the background of a certain era. Since the system is to be considered under a certain context, organization and development of each stage determine the goal of reform. Unifying people's minds is a difficult process for all reforms because the system is designed and formulated by some people but it needs to be followed by all. In short, the key to running a university effectively lies in coordinated systems, talents and the corresponding environments. The three elements are interdependent, interacting and influencing each other. The higher education reform in the new era should be based on national conditions, conform to the internal and external patterns of higher education development and make efforts in the top-level design. Academic studies and rules should be respected and followed with reverence for the authority of the system and the principle of putting people first, providing supporting services and drawing on the collective wisdom of personnel from the higher education sector and beyond, making steady progress in a stable and balanced manner.

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