

Research on the reform and innovation path of the higher education management system

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ABSTRACT

With the continuous development of higher education and the changing needs of society, the traditional management system of higher education has gradually revealed many problems, especially in improving education quality, resource allocation, academic freedom, and other aspects of the constraints. Based on the current situation and challenges of the education management system in colleges and universities, this paper discusses the theoretical basis and core objectives of reforming the education management system. It puts forward the innovative path of reform, particularly in administrative management, teaching management, scientific research management, academic freedom, and other specific reform measures. Therefore, this paper aims to provide a theoretical basis and practical guidance for the future reform of the higher education management system to promote the innovation and development of our country's higher education management system.

KEYWORDS

higher education management; system reform; innovation path; higher education

In modern society, with the rapid development of economic globalization and information technology, the role of higher education in national innovation, economic development, and social progress has become increasingly prominent. However, in the face of increasingly complex educational needs and social changes, the educational management system of our colleges and universities is still traditional and rigid, and many problems need to be solved urgently. In particular, the over-centralized administration, the lack of innovation ability, and the unreasonable allocation of resources have seriously affected the quality of education and the overall development of schools. In order to meet the needs of education under the new situation and promote innovation and quality improvement in higher education, it is particularly urgent to reform the existing education management system.

At present, the reform of the University management system has become an important issue in our country's higher education field. The goal of the reform is not only to improve the quality of education and the level of scientific research but also to improve the transparency, fairness, and flexibility of management and further enhance the autonomy of colleges and universities. This paper aims to explore the theoretical framework and innovation path of reforming the higher education management system, analyze the implementation path of different reform strategies, and put forward practical solutions. Through the in-depth analysis of the current education management system, this paper provides theoretical support and practical experience for the future reform of the higher education management system. It promotes the healthy and sustainable development of higher education in our country.

1 The theoretical framework and reform objectives of the reform higher education management system

1.1 The theoretical basis of the reform of the educational management system

The underlying logic of reforming the higher education management system originates from modern governance theory and the law of higher education development. The governance theory emphasizes that multiple subjects participate in coordination in decision-making, that power distribution is scientific, and that the operating mechanism is transparent. This provides theoretical support for breaking the single mode of "Administrative dominance" in traditional university management—by constructing a tripartite collaborative governance system of the government, universities, and society to promote the transformation of management from "Command and control" to "Service guidance." The new public management theory introduces the concept of efficiency optimization and result orientation. It advocates the moderate introduction of market competition mechanism into resource allocation to stimulate the vitality of colleges and universities^[1]. Meanwhile, the theory of academic community reaffirms the value of academic freedom. It advocates the establishment of a "Firewall" between administrative management and academic power to ensure that academic activities are not subject to excessive administrative intervention. The integration of these theories provides a direction for the reform: it is necessary to establish an efficient management mechanism and protect the essential function of the university as the core position of knowledge production and dissemination.

1.2 The core objectives of the reform of the higher education management system

The core goal of the reform is to build a new management system that is "Academic-oriented, multi-governance and dynamic adaptation." The primary task is to solve the dilemma of "Administration," clarify the boundaries of power and responsibility between the party and government departments and universities through the power list, and reduce the direct intervention in academic affairs such as discipline setting and talent evaluation. Secondly, it is necessary to activate the autonomy of the secondary colleges and transfer the decision-making power of personnel appointment and fund use to the front line of teaching and scientific research to form a governance structure of "Overall planning of the school and independent operation of the college." At the same time, it is necessary to establish an academic power guarantee mechanism and strengthen the decision-making position of the academic committee in key affairs such as discipline construction and professional title evaluation^[2]. Another important goal is to enhance social participation. Through the system design of the school-enterprise joint governance committee and alums participation in decision-making, the development of colleges and universities can be more closely aligned with industrial needs and social expectations. The realization of these goals will promote the transformation of universities from "Administrative subsidiaries" to "Modern governance subjects."

1.3 Multi-dimensional consideration of reform objectives

The setting of reform goals needs to balance multiple value demands. Inefficiency, it is necessary to optimize the management process, such as realizing cross-departmental business collaboration through digital platforms and freeing teachers from routine work such as filling out forms and reporting accounts. In terms of fairness, it is necessary to establish a differentiated evaluation system to avoid a 'one-size-fits-all' assessment that pressures basic disciplines and humanities and social sciences. The balance between academic freedom and the need for development is particularly crucial: protecting the original exploration of fundamental research through "Long-term" evaluation mechanisms and encouraging the rapid transformation of applied research through models such as "Open bidding for selecting the best candidates." The strengthening of social service function should be coordinated with the orientation of personnel training—the establishment of industrial colleges should not weaken general education, and the expansion of horizontal topics should not impact teaching investment. In addition, the tension between internationalization and localization also needs to be handled with caution. When introducing the International Advanced Management Mode, we should consider the special national conditions of the popularization stage of higher education in our country to prevent simple transplantation from causing acclimatization. This multi-dimensional consideration requires that the reform plan should be flexible and inclusive.

2 The innovative path of the reform of the higher education management system

2.1 Innovation in the Administrative System

The innovation of administrative management needs to change from a "Control-oriented" to a "Service-oriented" governance model. A power list system should be established to clarify the boundaries of the two management levels—the school level is responsible for strategic planning and resource coordination, and the decision-making power of discipline construction and talent introduction is decentralized to the college. The implementation of "One-stop" Administrative Service Center, integration of educational administration, scientific research, personnel, and other departments of the approval process, teachers applying for equipment procurement, Subject Declaration, and other affairs to achieve online processing. Explore the "Principal responsibility system under the leadership of the council," introduce local government, industry, and enterprise representatives to participate in major decisions of the school, and break the closed management system. A university piloted the "Dean Cabinet System," in which the dean independently formed a management team and set term goals. The university only conducted an annual evaluation of key performance indicators; this decentralization model has significantly improved the operational efficiency of secondary colleges^[3]. By constructing a digital management platform, cross-departmental data sharing and business collaboration are realized, and the administrative personnel is transformed from "Stamp clerks" to "Data analysts," providing precise support for teaching and scientific research.

2.2 Innovation of Teaching Management System

The core of educational management reform is establishing a dynamic adjustment mechanism centered on student growth. Implementing a fully credit-based and flexible academic system allows students to create personalized course systems across majors—engineering students can take philosophy courses to fulfill general education credits, and

entrepreneurial students can apply for a leave of absence while retaining their student status. We should establish a "professional early warning and dynamic adjustment" mechanism to implement biennial enrollment or transformation and restructuring for programs with persistently low employment rates and shrinking social demand. To deepen the integration of industry and education, schools and enterprises jointly develop "Dual-teacher" courses: Enterprise Engineers teach cutting-edge technology applications online, school teachers focus on theoretical analysis, and students complete practical projects that can replace some course credits. The teaching quality evaluation system introduces multiple subjects: graduates follow up on an employer Satisfaction Survey, students participate in course quality evaluation, and third-party organizations evaluate the social transformation value of teaching achievements. This kind of reform changes teaching management from "Standardized production" to "Individual cultivation" to meet the needs of the diversified development of talents.

2.3 Innovation of Scientific Research Management System

The innovation of scientific research management needs to break the double dilemma of "Emphasizing quantity and neglecting quality" and "Emphasizing project approval and neglecting transformation." Establishing a classified evaluation system: a "Long cycle + peer review" mechanism for basic research, which allows research teams not to assess the number of papers for five years; "Milestone" node management for applied research, focus on the market conversion rate of technology patents. Pilot the creation of ceilings in funding that enable the retention of unused funds for research funding, granting team leaders budget autonomy within a compliant framework and simplifying the approval processes for equipment procurement and travel reimbursements. Building an interdisciplinary scientific research platform and breaking the barriers between colleges and departments—the joint establishment of the "Digital Humanities Laboratory" by the College of Artificial Intelligence and the College of Arts, and the joint research of computer experts and linguistics professors on the intelligent collation technology of ancient books ^[4]. To improve the sharing mechanism of scientific research achievements, the university's technology transfer center acts as an intermediary bridge to promote the industrialization of scientific research achievements through price shares and licensing. A university has set up a "Proof of Concept fund" to support the initial transformation of laboratory results and make up for the "Valley of Death" between basic research and market application.

2.4 Academic freedom and innovation of internal governance structure

Strengthening the decision-making position of the academic community in the governance system is the key to reform. Expanding the authority of the academic committees at both university and college levels, making it clear that academic affairs must be considered by the academic committees—the criteria for evaluating teachers' professional titles should be set by the academic committees, cross-disciplinary integration programs will be demonstrated and implemented by interdisciplinary academic groups. Establishing a mechanism for "student and teacher representatives to participate in decision-making," where the student representative assembly has the right to propose amendments regarding curriculum design, canteen management, and other matters, and young teacher representatives will join the school's strategic planning committee. Implementing the "Negative list of administrative power" prohibits administrative departments from interfering in core academic activities such as academic evaluation and topic selection. In a university pilot "Academic leave system," professors can apply for half a year of paid leave every six years, during which exemption from administrative affairs focuses on academic deep farming ^[5]. By amending the university charter, the principle of academic freedom is transformed into a specific institutional guarantee—teachers who express controversial academic opinions are not subject to administrative sanctions, and scientific research teams can freely choose cooperative institutions. This innovation in governance structure allows universities to truly return to an "academic orientation," creating a free and relaxed institutional environment for knowledge innovation.

3 The implementation path and strategy of the reform of the higher education management system

3.1 Policy support and innovation of government role

The role of the government needs to change from "Direct manager" to "System designer" and provide support for the reform through policy leverage. Higher education laws and related laws and regulations should be revised to clarify the scope of autonomy of colleges and universities, such as allowing colleges and universities to set up interdisciplinary disciplines and pilot undergraduate, master, and doctoral training modes. Optimizing the financial allocation mechanism and establishing a flexible funding distribution system of "basic guarantee + performance rewards," providing special subsidies for breakthrough reform measures (such as a fully credit-based system and a long-term faculty system). The Way of government supervision has changed from "Process inspection" to "Result evaluation," canceling too many

administrative evaluation items and integrating them into core indicators such as "Talent training quality" and "Social service contribution." A province has piloted the "Negative list management system of colleges and universities," in which colleges and universities make decisions on matters outside the list, and the education department only implements macro-monitoring through annual quality reports. At the same time, we should establish a fault-tolerant mechanism to tolerate unprincipled errors in innovation and exploration and remove the psychological bondage of the "Fear of making mistakes and seeking safety."

3.2 The participation of social forces and the independent innovation of colleges and universities

Constructing a "University-society" collaborative innovation network is the key to releasing the vitality of running a school. To promote the in-depth participation of industry and enterprises in personnel training, schools and enterprises jointly build modern industrial colleges, enterprise experts join the professional teaching steering committee, and jointly develop practical courses reflecting the frontiers of Technology. In the aspect of Alumni Resource Integration, the Alumni Innovation Fund is set up to support students' entrepreneurial projects, and an alum tutorial system is established to provide career development guidance. A third-party social evaluation mechanism is introduced, and professional institutions are commissioned to conduct follow-up surveys on graduates' employment quality. The results are used as an important reference for adjusting the discipline. The independent innovation of Colleges and universities should focus on the path of characteristic development—local colleges and universities can establish "Regional Culture Research Institute" and bring dialect protection and intangible cultural heritage into the curriculum system; Science and engineering colleges and universities can explore the "Laboratory + venture capital" model, the scientific research achievements of teachers and students are directly connected with venture capital after internal review. A university and the local government jointly build a "Knowledge economy circle around the university." Key laboratories on campus are open to sharing equipment with small and medium-sized enterprises. Technical problems of enterprises are transformed into topics for students' graduation design, forming a virtuous circle of "Demand-driven innovation."

3.3 Internal culture construction and reform in colleges and universities

The reshaping of organizational culture is a deep guarantee for implementing management reforms. Strengthening the academic community's awareness through institutional designs such as "professors governing academic affairs" and "student participation in governance" aims to diminish the perception of administrative hierarchy. Informal communication channels such as principals' luncheons and young teachers' salons should be set up to promote cross-level ideological collisions. The construction of an innovation culture needs to be inclusive of failure, setting up an "Unconventional exploration fund" to fund high-risk and high-value original research and organizing an "Innovation failure case exhibition" to share the experience and lessons in scientific research setbacks. Regarding value orientation, "Social contribution" should be included in the teacher promotion evaluation system, and scientific research achievements should be encouraged to be transformed into public goods such as popular science books and policy suggestions. A university implements the "Cultural infiltration project": setting up a long corridor of discipline development history in the teaching building to enhance the sense of mission of teachers and students in academic inheritance; setting up a "Cross-border thinking workshop," artists, entrepreneurs, and scientists are invited to have a dialogue to break the barriers of professional cognition. This cultural transformation makes the university return to the essence of "Academic community" from "Administrative organization" and provides lasting spiritual power for deepening reform.

4 Conclusion

This study focuses on the reform and innovation path of the higher education management system and deeply discusses the challenges and development trends of the current higher education management system; the theoretical framework, core objectives, and innovation path of the reform are put forward. The research shows that reforming the higher education management system is necessary to improve the quality of education and the level of scientific research and is the key to realizing the sustainable development of higher education. By innovating the administrative management system, teaching management system, scientific research management system, and the guarantee of academic freedom, we can effectively solve the problems of rigidity and inefficiency in the traditional management mode; it can further stimulate the independent innovation ability of colleges and universities.

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