

Profound Implications, Inherent Requirements and Value Power of the "Four Services" in Higher Education for the New Era

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ABSTRACT

The "Four Services" is a crucial law-based insight we have gained through long-term practice. In the critical period of comprehensively building a modern socialist country, the "Four Services" embodies the fundamental purpose, political responsibility, important mission and practical goals of higher education in the new era, points out the development direction of higher education on the new journey of the new era, and serves as a guiding beacon for resolving a series of long-standing and emerging prominent contradictions and problems in China's education sector and building a leading country in education. The "Four Services" requires higher education to cultivate college students' awareness of serving the people, to have a distinctive political nature, to take ideal and belief education as the fundamental task, and to strive to fulfill college students' value pursuits. The "Four Services" gathers mighty forces, addresses difficulties and challenges, and provides law-based guidance for continuously writing a new chapter in the development of higher education.

KEYWORDS

Higher education; Four services; Strong education nation; Education policy

1 Introduction

The "Four Services" of higher education in the new era refer to serving the people, serving national governance, serving the consolidation and development of the system of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and serving reform and opening-up as well as socialist modernization. This important assertion is a new summary, generalization and refinement of the national educational policy, based on the century-long practice of China's higher education development and with a focus on the strategic overall situation of building a leading country in education. On the new journey of comprehensively building a modern socialist country, the "Four Services" not only point out the direction for the development of China's higher education cause in the new era and new journey, providing scientific guidance and action guidelines, but also become an important pointer for resolving deep-seated contradictions in the field of education and realizing the high-quality development of higher education under new historical conditions. Its connotation and value need to be systematically interpreted and explored in combination with the context of the times.

2 Profound Implications of the "Four Services" of Higher Education in the New Era

2.1 The Fundamental Purpose of Higher Education in the New Era: Serving the People

To take the path of socialist education development with Chinese characteristics, we must uphold the people-centered philosophy of development. We must keep firmly in mind that education development is for the people, relies on the people, and its fruits are shared by the people, and take people's satisfaction as the criterion for evaluating education development. Adhering to education for the people must ultimately be implemented in realizing, safeguarding and developing the fundamental interests of the overwhelming majority of the people, continuously meeting the people's needs for better education at a higher level, and deeply understanding the people's diversified demands for education as well as the practical requirements arising from the changes in China's principal social contradictions. We must put an end to "image projects" and "vanity projects" in the process of education development, and promote the more equitable sharing of education development achievements among all the people.

2.2 The Political Responsibility of Higher Education in the New Era: Serving National Governance

As an important aspect of the development of the socialist cause, higher education must serve national governance. Historical practice has fully proved that only socialism can save China and only socialism with Chinese characteristics can develop China. Adhering to education for national governance is a fundamental requirement for upholding and developing the cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and also a practical need for consolidating the ruling foundation, improving governance capacity, ensuring long-term governance, and maintaining national stability and security. To adhere to education for national governance, we must, through education reform and development, hold high the banner, gather public support, cultivate new generations of talent, promote cultural advancement, and showcase

China's image, so as to continuously consolidate the ruling foundation. To adhere to education for national governance, we must constantly enhance the capacity to carry out great struggles, build great projects, advance great causes, and realize great dreams.

2.3 The Important Mission of Higher Education in the New Era: Serving the Consolidation and Development of the System of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics

History has proved that the system of socialism with Chinese characteristics is distinctive in features, scientific and comprehensive, advanced and superior. It suits China's national conditions, conforms to the development stage, meets the people's will, has a strong spiritual core and authoritative power, and is the fundamental guarantee and powerful support for realizing the Chinese Dream of national rejuvenation. Adhering to education for the consolidation and development of the system of socialism with Chinese characteristics is an important task of socialist education and an important embodiment of upholding the socialist direction of running schools, as well as an inevitable requirement for upholding and developing the cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics and consolidating and improving the system of socialism with Chinese characteristics.

2.4 The Practical Goal of Higher Education in the New Era: Serving Reform and Opening-up and Socialist Modernization

Our reform has a clear direction, stance and principles. This direction is to continuously promote the self-improvement and development of the socialist system, rather than altering or abandoning the socialist system. We must uphold the Four Cardinal Principles—the foundation of our nation—which guarantees the correct orientation of reform and opening-up. No matter how we carry out reform and opening-up, we must always adhere to the path of socialism with Chinese characteristics, the theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics and the system of socialism with Chinese characteristics. Adhering to the orientation of higher education serving reform and opening-up as well as socialist modernization is an inevitable requirement for comprehensively deepening reform and expanding opening-up in the new era, and it is also an inherent component of building a great modern socialist country in the new era. To uphold this orientation, we need to cultivate all types of talents at all levels needed for reform and opening-up and socialist modernization. The education sector should give full play to its advantages of gathering a large number of talents, having a complete range of disciplines, being ideologically dynamic and possessing solid foundations. It should focus on the main battlefield of the economy and major areas of people's livelihood construction, strengthen scientific research, increase investment in technological innovation, and strive to produce more achievements in technological innovation and decision-making consultation.

3 Inherent Requirements of the "Four Services" of Higher Education in the New Era

3.1 "Serving the People" Requires Higher Education to Cultivate College Students' Awareness of Serving the People

Historical materialism tells us, and historical practice has fully proved, that the people are the creators of history and the true heroes of the times; without the people, we can achieve nothing. Therefore, we must uphold the people's dominant position, adhere to the people-centered development philosophy, and implement this concept throughout the entire process of national governance and social construction. College students are the new force for building socialism with Chinese characteristics and the hope of the motherland, and their value orientation is directly related to the future development direction of the country. If our college students lack the feelings of loving the people and being willing to serve them, only care about their own interests, fail to correctly understand and handle the relationship between the country, the collective, and the individual, and become sophisticated egoists, they will not only fail to live up to their youth and serve the motherland and the people wholeheartedly, but also be unable to find their own position in the tide of the times, realize their beautiful ideals, and even less bear the historical responsibility of national rejuvenation.

3.2 "Serving National Governance" Requires Higher Education to Have a Distinctive Political Nature

The development of a country cannot do without the advancement of education, and social progress relies on the support of human resources. As the cradle of talent cultivation, higher education is destined to serve national governance and provide a steady stream of talents for national development. At the same time, they should take the missions and goals of national governance as the requirements and guidelines for their work, fully, accurately, and comprehensively

implement the decisions and arrangements of education authorities, and translate the higher-level requirements for building a leading country in education into specific educational practices. In addition, colleges and universities need to educate and guide students to consciously integrate their personal growth with national undertakings, connect their professional knowledge with national development, study diligently, and grow into pillars of the nation.

3.3 "Serving the Consolidation and Development of the System of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics" Requires Higher Education to Take Ideal and Belief Education as the Fundamental Task

The system of socialism with Chinese characteristics requires higher education to firmly grasp ideal and belief education as the foundation of values and take it as the core content of fostering virtue through education. Through diverse forms such as special lectures, red research tours, and theoretical seminars, we should enhance young college students' understanding, recognition, and commitment to the process and content of building socialism with Chinese characteristics, enabling them to deeply comprehend the historical inevitability and practical superiority of the system of socialism with Chinese characteristics. At the same time, we must firmly establish and strengthen the ideals and beliefs of teachers and students, guide them to correctly understand their era responsibilities and historical missions, maintain a clear-headed mindset and grasp the mainstream direction amid the integration and confrontation of various social thoughts, and consciously resist erroneous views such as historical nihilism.

3.4 "Serving Reform and Opening-up and Socialist Modernization" Requires Higher Education to Strive to Fulfill College Students' Value Pursuits

To achieve the grand goal of national rejuvenation, China needs a large number of builders with firm political convictions, outstanding capabilities, and strong professional skills. This constitutes the core requirement for higher education talent cultivation in the new era. Contemporary young college students are born in a prosperous era and shoulder heavy responsibilities. They have grown up amid the deepening of reform and opening-up, witnessed the great leap of the country from prosperity to strength, and will become the new force for comprehensively deepening reform and opening-up, building a great modern socialist country, and the architects of the grand blueprint for national rejuvenation. Higher education must firmly grasp the correct value pursuits that young college students should possess, focus on the positions and missions they need to assume when entering society to participate in national construction and shoulder social responsibilities, organically integrate value guidance with capacity building, and continuously strengthen the ideological tempering and ability training of young college students.

4 The Great Value of the "Four Services" of Higher Education in the New Era

4.1 Gathering Mighty Forces: Earnestly Implementing the "Four Services"

On the new journey, as a key link connecting the education chain, talent chain, innovation chain, and industrial chain, higher education's capacity to serve national strategies directly impacts the progress of the great cause of national rejuvenation. To unite and lead the people of all ethnic groups in successfully fulfilling this mission, we must fully implement the national education policy, translate the requirements of the "Four Services" into concrete education practices, solidly carry out all aspects of work, and form an all-staff, whole-process, and all-round synergy for talent cultivation. This not only requires colleges and universities to base themselves on their own school-running orientations and integrate the "Four Services" into core links such as discipline construction, talent training, and scientific research, but also demands education administrative departments to strengthen overall coordination and provide policy support and resource guarantees for colleges and universities to practice the "Four Services". Furthermore, it calls for the whole society to foster a collaborative education atmosphere and jointly safeguard the development of the higher education cause.

On the new journey, to unite and lead the people of all ethnic groups in successfully accomplishing this mission, we must fully implement the national education policy, uphold the people-centered approach to developing education, fulfill the fundamental task of fostering virtue through education, and run education that satisfies the people. We need to educate and guide college students to enthusiastically join the historical tide of reform and opening-up as well as socialist modernization, resist and oppose the fallacies of the "China threat theory" and "China collapse theory" spread by hostile forces, and contribute their youthful vigor and diligent efforts to serving reform and opening-up and socialist modernization.

4.2 Addressing Difficulties and Challenges: A Guiding Beacon for Building a Leading Country in Education

In today's world, profound changes unseen in a century are accelerating, and a new round of technological and

industrial revolution is advancing in depth. International competition centered on high-caliber talents and commanding heights of science and technology has become unprecedentedly fierce. Countries around the world have introduced talent strategies to seize development opportunities, and developed countries such as the United States and Europe have continued to increase investment in programs for recruiting and cultivating top talents. At the same time, a series of long-standing and emerging prominent contradictions and problems in China's education sector are in urgent need of resolution, such as unbalanced regional education development, disconnect between talent training and industrial demands, insufficient supply of top-notch innovative talents, and utilitarianism in the higher education evaluation system. These issues have become major bottlenecks restricting the construction of a leading country in education.

We must adhere to the "Four Services" of education and fulfill the fundamental task of fostering virtue through education. We should take cultivating builders and successors of socialism as the core mission, strive to nurture new people of the era who can shoulder the responsibility of national rejuvenation, and further improve the education system for all-round development of morality, intelligence, physical fitness, aesthetics and labor education. We need to proactively integrate into the new development paradigm, fully, accurately and comprehensively implement the new development philosophy, take serving the construction of the new development paradigm as the strategic orientation for the development of education, run education based on China's realities, unswervingly take the path of independent talent cultivation, and significantly enhance the capacity of education to support economic and social development. We should coordinate the domestic and international situations, expand education opening-up in the new era, improve the quality and level of education opening-up, optimize the global layout of education opening-up, and accelerate the enhancement of the international influence of China's education.

4.3 Revealing the Secret of Success: Providing Law-based Guidance for Creating Historical Great Achievements

The "Four Services" have systematically revealed the code to the historic achievements and the structural transformation in China's education sector since the advent of the new era. They have accumulated and demonstrated the great value of higher education in advancing the construction of a leading country in education through four dimensions: serving the people, serving national governance, serving the consolidation and development of the system of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and serving reform and opening-up as well as socialist modernization. In addition, they have provided a law-based guideline for comprehensively building a modern socialist country and continuously forging new historical feats. Higher education is a sophisticated systematic project involving multiple dimensions such as talent cultivation, discipline construction, scientific research and innovation, social services, and international exchanges. Only with clear goals, coherent strategies, and targeted measures can all its links work in synergy to achieve tangible results in talent development. While clarifying the original aspiration, mission, and value orientation of universities adhering to socialism with Chinese characteristics, the "Four Services" are rooted in China's current development goals and future directions, thus establishing a comprehensive system that deeply integrates educational functions with national strategies. To this end, universities must respond to the nation's requirements and integrate the "Four Services" into the entire process of school governance and operation. They should earnestly grasp the profound implications of the "Four Services" and take their inherent requirements as the problem-oriented, goal-oriented, value-oriented, and action-guiding principles for the development of higher education. Universities need to proactively align discipline setup with major national strategic needs, strengthen the integration of value guidance and capacity building in talent cultivation, focus scientific research and innovation on the main economic battlefield and key areas of people's livelihood, and always uphold the people-centered stance in social services. Guided by the "Four Services", universities can keep to the correct orientation, clarify development ideas, and implement precise policies, thereby providing solid guarantee and strong support for running education that satisfies the people and fulfilling the fundamental task of fostering virtue through education, and laying a firm foundation for cultivating more new generations of capable young people who can shoulder the responsibility of national rejuvenation.

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