

(Review Article*)

The Research on Promotion of Higher Vocational Students' Professional Abilities Based on the Belt and Road Initiative

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Abstract

This paper delves into the connotations and key areas of cooperation within the Belt and Road Initiative, analyzing the main industries propelled by the strategy and the ensuing demands on talent vocational skills. It proposes that vocational students should emphasize enhancing four key occupational capabilities: understanding of regulatory policies, execution capability of international standards, application capability of foreign languages, and identification capability with national cultures. The study advocates for reforming teaching with "Collaboration" as the Core Focus, cultivating students with the Theme of "Exchange," and enriching practice with an Outward Orientation to foster technically skilled talents adaptable to the Belt and Road Strategy. This approach provides insights for innovative positioning in talent cultivation, upgrading the standards of talent development, and enhancing vocational capabilities in higher vocational institutions.

Keywords: The Belt and Road, Higher Vocational Student , Professional Abilities

Introduction

As a major global power, China took the lead in proposing the development concept of the Belt and Road Initiative, which holds profound strategic implications for China's modernization and global status. The 'Silk Road Economic Belt' within the Belt and Road Initiative aims to further integrate the economic environment of Southeast Asia, enhance economic ties with Europe, and optimize the development pattern between Asia and Europe. It is crucial to facilitate maritime transport networks connecting China with Central Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia, West Asia, the Persian Gulf, the Indian Ocean, Western Europe, and Russia. Leveraging key international transport hubs and central cities, the establishment of targeted economic and trade platforms will enhance regional development, thus promoting the efficiency and quality of regional economic cooperation. The '21st-Century Maritime Silk Road' strategy seeks to connect the continents of Europe, Asia, and Africa through maritime routes, extending the coverage of China's coastal ports' international economic and trade industries to regions such as Europe and the South Pacific. Utilizing important seaports as transportation hubs, the strategy aims to coordinate the construction of efficient and convenient transport corridors. By implementing a series of economic development measures, the strategic layout will be refined, forming a strategic closed-loop encompassing both maritime and terrestrial points.

Materials and Methods

The Key Industries Driven by the Belt and Road Initiative

Enhancing Infrastructure Connectivity to Drive Development in the Field of Basic Facilities

The execution of the Belt and Road Initiative has significantly propelled the advancement of the transportation sector and infrastructure construction industry. China has spearheaded and engaged in major endeavors such as the New Suez Canal in Egypt, Gwadar Port in Pakistan, the China-Hungary-Serbia Railway, and the Chengdu-Kunming-Bangkok International Passage. Concurrently, the Belt and Road Initiative has enhanced infrastructure cooperation in energy and telecommunications between China and its neighboring regions, facilitating economic development efforts. China has led and cooperated in various prominent projects under development, including the China-Russia oil and gas pipelines. With the support of preferential loans and aid from the Chinese government, Chinese enterprises have undertaken infrastructure projects such as roads, telecommunications, and power facilities in Central Asia. Economic collaboration projects, like the China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan highway and the Tajikistan domestic transmission lines, are actively being executed. As infrastructure is developed in countries along the Belt and Road route, primary beneficiaries include international engineering project contracting firms and Chinese mechanical engineering enterprises.

Unimpeded trade to drive the investment and trade industry going global

From 2013 to 2022, the total import and export volume between China and partner countries in the Belt and Road Initiative reached a cumulative total of \$19.1 trillion, with an average annual growth rate of 6.4%. Two-way investment between China and these countries exceeded \$380 billion, with China's outbound direct investment surpassing \$240 billion, covering various fields of economic and social development. Cumulative investments from partner countries in China exceeded \$140 billion, with nearly 67,000 new enterprises established in the country. In 2023, China's import and export volume with Belt and Road countries reached RMB 19.47 trillion, representing a 2.8% year-on-year increase, accounting for 46.6% of China's total foreign trade value. Both the scale and proportion are at their highest levels since the inception of the initiative, maintaining positive growth momentum. Based on the above data analysis, under the impetus of the Belt and Road Initiative, the development prospects of China's investment and trade industries appear promising.

Financial integration to provide financial investment support for the strategic implementation

The development of the Belt and Road Initiative relies heavily on the support and guarantee of significant funds. China has taken the lead in and participated in major financial projects, including: firstly, contributing \$40 billion to establish the Silk Road Fund, which actively serves the operation of the Belt and Road Initiative. Secondly, initiating and establishing the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, which fills the existing gap in infrastructure investment in Asia within the current global financial system. Thirdly, China's State Development Bank has reached cooperation intentions with 60 countries, establishing a reserve of over 900 projects for the Belt and Road Initiative with an investment fund of approximately \$900 billion. Fourthly, as early as 2014, 27 countries had signed currency swap agreements with China, totaling nearly 3 trillion yuan. Financial integration ensures the effective implementation of the Belt and Road Initiative.

People-to-people bond to drive growth in the tourism and cultural industries

The Belt and Road Initiative has promoted people-to-people bonds, driving the development

of the tourism industry and fostering cultural exchanges among countries along the route. The Silk Road is home to 80% of the world's cultural heritage sites, and the connectivity of infrastructure in Belt and Road countries has significantly enhanced the accessibility of tourism. According to relevant data from China's tourism sector, in the coming years, China is projected to send over 150 million tourists to countries along the Belt and Road route; concurrently, it will attract 85 million visitors from these countries to travel to China, with an expected economic benefit exceeding \$110 billion.

The Industry Demands for Talent Vocational Skills Driven by the Belt and Road Initiative

The implementation of the Belt and Road Initiative, with the integration of facilities, unimpeded trade, financial integration, and people-to-people bonds, has propelled the development of interconnected industries such as transportation, international trade, financial investment, and cultural tourism. This has increased the demand for technical and skilled personnel, providing numerous opportunities for Chinese higher vocational students to work abroad.

Enhancement of Vocational Skills for Students in Transportation, Civil Engineering, Equipment Manufacturing, and Electronics Information Disciplines

The effort to enhance facilities connectivity under the Belt and Road Initiative has created abundant employment opportunities for students in the disciplines of transportation, civil engineering, equipment manufacturing, and electronics information at higher vocational colleges. These students need to not only solidify their professional knowledge but also focus on improving their ability to adhere to international standards. Executing international standards is based on understanding and mastering product standards and technical standards from internationally recognized standardization bodies. Understanding regulatory policies and having a sense of national culture are essential for working abroad and significantly improve work efficiency.

Advancement of Vocational Skills for Students in Financial and Economic Trade Disciplines

The growth in international investments drives trade expansion, creating more opportunities for students in financial and economic trade disciplines to work abroad. Apart from fostering strong professional skills and good work ethics, students in this discipline should emphasize enhancing their understanding of regulatory policies. Investments and trades heavily rely on policies; thus, understanding and navigating policies related to investments, trades, finance, and accounting in Belt and Road countries are crucial. Adhering to policies and ensuring smooth trade operations requires an improved understanding of regulatory policies and embracing the national cultures of countries along the route. Furthermore, the application of foreign languages cannot be overlooked, as it forms the basis for enhancing comprehension of regulatory policies and acknowledging national cultures.

Improvement of Vocational Skills for Students in Tourism, Cultural Arts, and Journalism and Communication Disciplines

The Belt and Road Initiative creates opportunities for tourism promotion, artistic exhibitions, and cultural exchanges. Whether in the tourism, cultural arts, or journalism and communication disciplines, students need to cultivate professional skills and work ethics while primarily focusing on enhancing their understanding and recognition of the national cultures of countries along the Belt and Road route. The rich tourism resources and ancient cultures of these countries offer great potential for employment in the field of outbound tourism. Understanding and accepting diverse national cultures not only provide greater job opportunities in the foreign tourism sector but also contribute to domestic tourism industry development by effectively promoting China's abundant tourism resources and traditional national culture to countries along the Belt and Road route. The improvement

of foreign language skills is crucial for students in the tourism, cultural arts, and journalism and communication disciplines as language proficiency facilitates cultural exchange.

Conclusion

For the enhancement of the four vocational skills, namely "understanding of regulatory policies," "execution capability of international standards," "application capability of foreign languages," and "identification capability with national cultures," higher vocational colleges should improve students' vocational abilities in three main aspects:

Reforming Teaching with "Collaboration" as the Core Focus

Collaborating with Vocational Schools in Belt and Road Countries to Establish Specialized Programs

Focusing on specialized programs related to major Belt and Road construction projects in local areas, meeting the continuous demand for technical talent in project construction and operation. Scientifically selecting and establishing majors with high local employment demand in manufacturing and service industries, jointly formulating professional teaching standards with vocational schools in countries along the Belt and Road, enhancing teachers' professional quality, adhering to the integration of production and teaching, school-enterprise cooperation, and collaborating to cultivate talents, serving local economic and social development.

Collaborating with Vocational Schools in Belt and Road Countries to Develop Relevant Courses

For different major disciplines, collaborating with vocational schools in countries along the Belt and Road to develop relevant courses. Introducing courses such as "Analysis of Policies and Regulations in Belt and Road Countries" or expanding the content on the interpretation of Belt and Road policies and regulations in courses like "Forms and Policies," to enhance students' understanding of policies and regulations in Belt and Road countries and grasp the significance of cooperation widely. Offering courses such as "Interpretation of International Technical Standards" or increasing the emphasis on interpreting international technical standards in professional courses to lay the foundation for improving students' ability to execute international standards. Introducing elective courses in languages such as Russian and Arabic, and gradually offering courses in Thai and Vietnamese when conditions permit, to enhance students' application abilities in foreign languages. Expanding elective courses such as "Appreciation of National Cultures in Countries along the Belt and Road."

Strengthening Project Construction through Collaboration with Vocational Schools in Belt and Road Countries

Collaborating with vocational schools in countries along the Belt and Road to establish joint training centers, technology innovation centers, and international technology transfer centers to facilitate exchanges between participating teachers and students, collaborate on project construction, tackle technical challenges, and collectively enhance technological innovation capabilities.

Cultivating Students with the Theme of "Exchange"

Promoting Cultural Exchange to Inherit and Promote the Spirit of the Silk Road

Initiating cultural festivals, art exhibitions, tourism events, book fairs, and art exhibitions related to the Belt and Road Initiative through student associations, gradually developing cultural years, art festivals, book exhibitions, forums, as well as various charitable activities and social volunteer services between vocational schools in countries along the Belt and Road, aiming to inherit

and promote the spirit of the Silk Road.

Conducting Educational Exchange based on the Concept of Mutual Learning and Exchange

Student exchange forms the foundation for educational exchange. Drawing inspiration from the successful experiences of the European Union's Erasmus+ framework that sponsors vocational education students to study and intern in other member countries for up to one year, establishing partner exchange institutions, organizing regular student exchanges and practical internships, fostering mutual understanding, mutual learning, and expanding international perspectives.

Facilitating "Double Innovation" Exchange through Sharing Successful Experiences

Actively promoting exchanges of successful experiences in innovation and entrepreneurship with vocational schools in countries along the Belt and Road; actively participating in "double innovation" project exchanges and achievement showcases at vocational education institutions in countries along the Belt and Road. Leveraging existing resources, engaging in pragmatic cooperation in fields of common interest such as innovation and entrepreneurship, collectively fostering innovation and entrepreneurship among students from both sides, driving economic development in countries along the Belt and Road through "double innovation."

Enriching Practice with an Outward Orientation

Integrating into Practice through Collaboration with Chinese Enterprises Expanding Practices

Chinese vocational colleges actively engage in school-enterprise cooperation with Chinese enterprises expanding overseas, using the "borrowing a boat to go out to sea" approach to expand domestic and international internships and practices, enriching the practical experiences of vocational students, jointly cultivating technically skilled talents with high comprehensive qualities that can adapt to work and life needs both domestically and internationally.

Incorporating Local Enterprise Expansion Practices with the Goal of Flourishing

In addition to collaborating with Chinese enterprises expanding overseas, Chinese vocational colleges should establish connections with local enterprises in countries along the Belt and Road Initiative, actively engaging in school-enterprise cooperation to gradually provide internship opportunities within these countries, enhancing practical experiences for vocational students. This collaboration aims to cultivate technically skilled talents with high comprehensive qualities that can integrate into countries along the Belt and Road. Achieving the goal of flourishing through internships and practices in local enterprises in countries along the Belt and Road.

Expanding Practices by Collaborating with Foreign Enterprises with the Strategy of Extending Influence

Chinese vocational colleges should leverage their accumulated experience in school-enterprise cooperation with Chinese enterprises expanding overseas and local enterprises in countries along the Belt and Road Initiative to establish partnerships with third-country enterprises operating in Belt and Road countries. With the strategy of extending influence, providing opportunities for Chinese vocational students to intern in third-country enterprises, collectively cultivating technically skilled talents with high comprehensive qualities that can adapt to the customs of countries along the Belt and Road, as well as thrive in the working environment of third-country enterprises.

To enhance the vocational skills of Chinese vocational students based on the Belt and Road Initiative, efforts should focus on developing professional skills and fostering vocational ethics while enhancing students' understanding of policies and regulations in Belt and Road countries, execution capability of international standards, application ability of foreign languages, and identifica-

tion capability with national cultures. This approach aims to cultivate technically skilled talents required for the Belt and Road Initiative.

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