

Reasons Behind the Growing Popularity of Sino-Foreign Cooperative Educational Programs

YANG Wei

(The International College of Xiamen University, Xiamen 361102, China)

Abstract: The continuously expanding program scale and increasing student enrollment number of Sino-foreign cooperative educational programs in recent years have demonstrated their increasing acceptance among Chinese students. This paper aims to explore and analyze the reasons behind the growing popularity of Sino-foreign joint educational programs.

Key words: Sino-foreign cooperative programs; education; students

中图分类号:G424 文献标识码:A 文章编号:1009-5039(2016)15-0251-02

1 Introduction

Under the great support of China's Ministry of Education, Sino-foreign education programs have been continuously and successfully expanding and developing for over two decades. In January 26, 1995, the former State Education Commission released Interim Provisions for Chinese-Foreign Cooperation in Running Schools, providing the legal basis for the rapid development of cooperative educational programs. In 2003, the State Council promulgated Regulations of the People's Republic of China on Chinese-Foreign Cooperation in Running Schools, and Ministry of Education issued relevant official regulatory documents thereafter¹. These national laws and regulations have strengthened the management and supervision of the cooperation between China and foreign countries in running educational programs, improved the quality of cooperative schools, enhanced the communication and collaboration in education between China and other countries, and promoted the healthy development of Sino-foreign cooperative educational programs.

In 2010, China issued and implemented Outline of China's National Plan for Medium and Long-term Education Reform and Development (2010-2020) (hereinafter referred to as the Plan). The Plan explicitly states that schools at all levels and of all varieties should be encouraged to engage in diverse forms of international exchanges and cooperation, and a good job should be done in running demonstrative joint schools or joint projects in cooperation with foreign partners². Under the guidance of the Plan, Chinese educational institutions at all levels have been establishing and continuously deepening cooperation with foreign counterparts, and Sino-foreign education programs have achieved remarkable progress and reached a new level of advancement. Six years after the implementation of the Plan, the scale of Chinese-foreign joint education programs has been continuously expanding, the number of high-quality and demonstrative cooperative programs has been steadily increasing, and the program management style and system have been gradually innovating.

The Sino-foreign cooperative education programs have been attracting an increasing number of students and become the preferred choice for a lot of students planning to receive overseas edu-

cation. There are about 550,000 students currently studying in Chinese-foreign joint schools, and the graduate student number has reached over 1.5 million. What are the reasons behind the increasing popularity of Sino-foreign cooperative educational programs and what are the advantages of these programs?

2 Reasons behind the Growing Acceptance and Popularity of Sino-Foreign Cooperative Educational Programs

2.1 High-quality education facilities and resources

One of the most prominent advantages of Chinese-foreign joint educational programs is the internalized teaching and management style. The cooperative educational programs serve as a bridge connecting Chinese and foreign educational systems. They help Chinese students successfully achieve the smooth transition between Chinese and foreign learning styles, and get more familiar with foreign teaching concepts.

The cooperative programs, through extensive communication and exchange between Chinese colleges and foreign counterparts, have been learning advanced teaching experience and program-running models from abroad. These programs have introduced excellent or even first class educational resources, and have been bringing in highly qualified teaching staff from other countries. This means that Chinese students are able to enjoy quality teaching materials and facilities at home.

2.2 Intensive foreign language training

Students of Chinese-foreign educational programs need to finish a wide variety of courses both domestically and abroad. Therefore, acquiring foreign language ability is one of the key tasks for Chinese students. Joint cooperative programs offer courses specially designed for laying a solid linguistic foundation for students. These language courses try to develop scientific curricula and class management methods by adopting advanced foreign teaching methodology.

The integration of foreign educational system means a more flexible teaching style and a greater emphasis on students' lan-

收稿日期:2016-05-05 修回日期:2016-05-25

作者简介:杨薇(1989—),女,福建莆田人,厦门大学国际学院英语教师,研究方向:英语教育教学法。

本栏目责任编辑:王力

guage application ability. Different from traditional English classes in China which focus more on students' exam-taking skills, the language course of Sino-foreign cooperative educational programs attaches great importance to student's practical ability of using foreign language in their study and life. Bilingual or monolingual teaching is widely adopted in language courses so as to immerse students in the environment of using foreign language daily. Quality foreign textbooks are imported and the number of foreign teaching staff is increasing. A range of measures are taken to enhance students' language competence and train them to become qualified international students.

2.3 Money saving

Another important reason attracting an increasing number of students to choose joint cooperative programs is cost saving. Students studying abroad generally need to spend approximately 200,000RMB on tuition fees and other expenses annually. Families with medium income may regard this amount of money as a great financial burden. Therefore, students would like to choose cooperative educational programs in China as a way to save costs while enjoying equally high-quality educational resources.

2.4 Bright employment prospect

Sino-foreign cooperative educational schools aim at fostering talents with international vision and all-round abilities. Having received education both domestically and abroad, graduates are able to develop generally effective command of a foreign language and cultivate specific skills in their own majors. These advantages are quite competitive in job market and help graduates stand out in fields requesting language ability and overseas study or living experience.

2.5 Promotion of the further modernization and internalization of China's educational undertaking

The advanced education system, teaching methodology and

school management experience introduced by cooperative educational schools from abroad can help China better promote the reform and innovation of education system and improve China's education level. The quality international educational resources can be drawn on to enhance the comprehensive ability of Chinese teachers and further promote Chinese education industry. Having recognized the significance of cooperative education, Ministry of Education has been greatly supporting and strengthening the development of joint schools. Therefore, the cooperative education has been increasingly known and accepted by Chinese students and parents.

3 Conclusion

The constantly improving quality ensures wider acceptance of Sino-foreign joint schools in society and certainly will keep attracting a growing amount of Chinese students with the plan to study overseas. Joint schools should fully explore the advantages of teaching experience, education resources and school-running model to deepen the educational reform in China and foster more students with all-round capabilities.

References:

- [1] 张万红. 申国昌. 新中国成立60年中外合作办学回顾与展望[J]. 世界教育信息, 2014 (3): 54-61.
- [2] Ministry of Education. Outline of China's National Plan for Medium and Long-term Education Reform and Development (2010-2020) [EB/OL]. http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/China/China_National_Long_Term_Educational_Reform_Development_2010-2020_eng.pdf, 2016/05/18.