

Exploring the Education and Training Mode of International Students under “the Belt and Road” Initiative

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Abstract: With the rapid development of the global economy, talents will become a foundation of competition, which has been agreed by many countries. Universities in China have incorporated the training of international talents into the training target system, and how to train international talents serving "the Belt and Road" construction is a problem for contemporary universities. It is urgent to build a good management mechanism and education training model for international students. In recent years, the number of overseas students studying in China along "the Belt and Road" has increased, but the training mechanism is still incomplete. This paper draws on the experience of Japanese students. Firstly, we should make up for the shortage of teachers and counselors. Secondly, according to the uniqueness of international students, we should innovate the curriculum design and implement convergence management. Finally, we should optimize the teaching mode, and pay attention to the teaching of practical ability and Chinese culture on the basis of theoretical teaching, which will provide important guarantees for the training of "the Belt and Road" talents.

Introduction

Status of International Students in China. In 2010, the Ministry of Education of China formulated the "Study Abroad in China". It is estimated that 150,000 international students with higher education qualifications will be accepted by 2020. And Ministry of Education of China formulated the corresponding macro management system and training model. According to the Ministry of Education of China, the number of international students in China was about 265,100 in 2010. And then increased year by year. By 2018, the number of international students in China rose to 492,100 (Fig. 1). In recent years, the growth of international students in China is growing strongly, especially in the countries along "the Belt and Road", which is the main driving force for the growth of Chinese students. This shows that the internationalization trend of Chinese universities is obvious, and there is an urgent need to optimize the management system and education training model for international students. The cultivation of international students is conducive to the dissemination and promotion of national languages, lays a foundation for the internationalization of universities and colleges, and serves as a bridge for the communication and cooperation of science and technology, economy, politics and culture among countries.

In 2013, President Jinping Xi proposed "the Belt and Road" initiative, namely "the Silk Road Economic Belt" and "the 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road". With the development and advancement of "the Belt and Road", open international cooperation such as multilateral trade and free trade has received extensive support from the international community, which has achieved fruitful results. To better implement "the Belt and Road" strategy, there is an urgent need to train international talents and accept international students in China, which will contribute to the spread of Chinese cultural industry and the promotion of overseas business of Chinese enterprises and the smooth progress of trade cooperation. Understanding of different nationalities and cultures will provide strong support for China's promotion of "the Belt and Road" Initiative. By training international students, the Chinese national spirit will be spread to the countries along "the Belt and

Road". At the same time, international students can also participate in the construction of "the Belt and Road" through their knowledge they learn in China. Based on this virtuous cycle, we will provide the driving force for the construction of "the Belt and Road" Initiative.

Chinese colleges and universities provide a good platform for international students in China, but also face huge challenges. How to train international talents for the construction of the "the Belt and Road" is an urgent problem that contemporary universities need to consider and solve. Building a good management mechanism and education training model for international students has become an important issue in the new age.

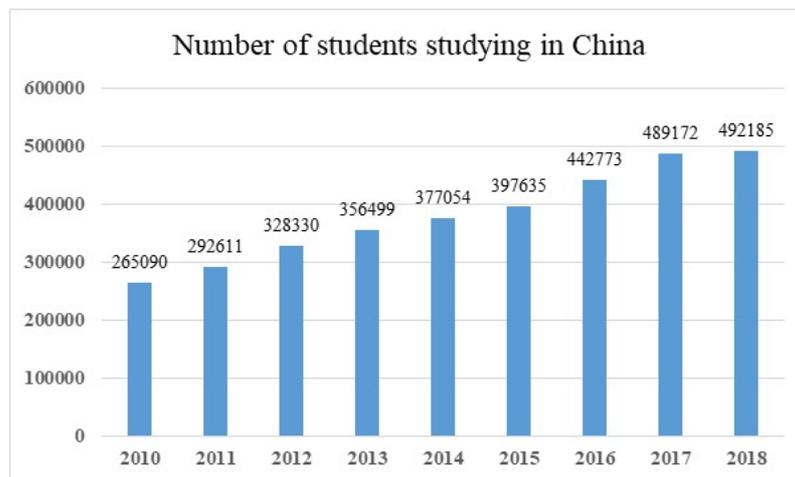


Figure1. Statistics of international students in China 2010-2018

Date Source: Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China

Status of International Students in Japan. On July 29, 2008, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology Japan, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, jointly formulated the "300,000 International Student Program". The number of international students in Japan is expected to increase from 138,800 in 2008 to 300,000 in 2020. In order to achieve this plan, promote the internationalization of Japanese higher education, and obtain outstanding talents for international students, the Japanese government has implemented various degrees of tuition fee exemption for international students and established policies such as offering courses in English and obtaining degrees in English.

In January 2019, JASSO released a survey report on the status of international students. As of May 1, 2018, the number of international students in Japanese higher education institutions and Japanese language education institutions reached 299,000 (Fig. 2). The "300,000 International Student Program" has been basically reached. Among them, the number of international students from Asia was 279,250, accounting for 93.4%. The number of international students from Europe was 10,115, accounting for 3.4%. The number of international students from North America was 3,415, accounting for 1.1%.

In the age of globalization, Japanese higher education institutions are actively accepting international students, which is an important source of highly skilled human resources. It will not only increase Japan's international human resources and form an international network with foreign countries, but also will contribute to world stability and peace.

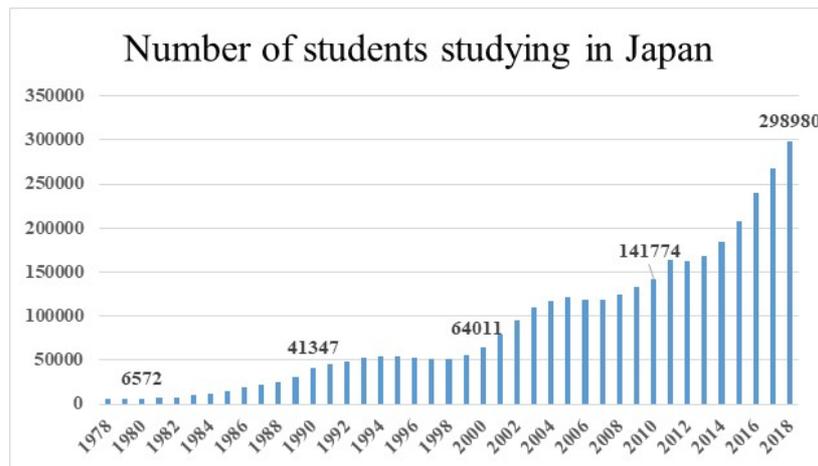


Figure2. Statistics of international students in Japan 1978-2018

Date Source: Japan Student Services Organization

The Main Problems in the Training Model of International Students in the New Era

Make up for the Shortage of Teachers for International Students. Firstly, the shortage of teaching staff in English. There are generally two teaching languages for international students in China: Teaching in English and teaching in Chinese. In colleges and universities, there are relatively many courses taught in English, especially for international students coming from countries along "the Belt and Road". In order to vigorously develop teachers to teach in English to international students, most universities will teach international students by introducing young and middle-aged teachers with overseas study experience or directly hiring foreign teachers. But Both of them have problems. Due to the large number of professional courses in undergraduate teaching, hiring all foreign teachers will bring pressure on school funds. On the other hand, the introduction of highly educated teachers with experience of studying abroad, although teachers have certain advantages in foreign language, there is no guarantee that professional courses can be taught in English and achieved good teaching results. Therefore, there is an urgent need to conduct regular English teaching training for the introduced young and middle-aged teachers to continuously improve their professional courses and English proficiency.^[1] At present, there is relatively little training for college teachers in China. Although every college teacher participates in pre-job training, the training cycle is too short and the training purpose is too single. Therefore, the overall training is too formal, and college teachers themselves do not receive Enough promotion.

Secondly, the shortage of Mandarin Chinese Teacher. The recruitment and training of international students plays a very important role in the implementation of "the Belt and Road" strategy. We can cultivate talents with strong Chinese language skills, rich professional knowledge, and understanding of Chinese culture to serve China's "the Belt and Road" strategy.^[2] For international students, the study and communication of Chinese is as important as professional courses. Colleges and universities need to offer Chinese courses at different levels for international students who have no basic knowledge of Chinese or need to improve their Chinese language skills, which will help international students to integrate into foreign life more quickly, increase their motivation for study, and help them to complete their studies in China. The improvement of Chinese helps international students to read Chinese books and literature, listen to Chinese news and songs, conduct Chinese lectures and carry out academic exchanges, etc. On the basis of improving the overall quality of teachers, it is necessary for Chinese colleges and universities to strengthen the faculty of teaching Chinese, so as to enable them to undertake the Chinese teaching work for international students.

Shortage of International Students' Counselors. With the increasing of international students in China, the demand for international students' counselors is increasing. However, some colleges and universities have not been equipped with counselors who understand Chinese culture, have a

good level of English and have professional knowledge such as education and psychology, so they are caught in the problem of shortage of international students' counselors.

Taking the Japanese international student management system as a reference, in Japan, there is no counselor for international students, but delegating the work to undergraduates and graduate students. Japanese universities usually have a life guider for international students who come to Japan for the first time. The instruction time is about 40 hours per semester. This method makes full use of the good foreign language and professional advantages of Japanese students, and solves the shortage of international student counselors. It helps international students to integrate into the study and life of foreign countries quickly, and also improves the internationalization of students.

Chinese universities can learn from Japan's experience and select students who are suitable as life instructors for international students from the corresponding majors. They can also select corresponding staff to serve as international student counselors from teachers who have experience studying abroad or have overseas study experience. While training international students, giving Chinese teachers and students more opportunities to contact foreign cultures is conducive to promoting the internationalization process of Chinese universities.

Single Courses for International Students. At present, most colleges and universities have relatively single courses for international students, mainly to teach professional courses, which makes it difficult to cultivate comprehensive talents suitable for the development of "the Belt and Road" strategy. Therefore, the education model for international students needs to be unique.

Taking the training model of Japanese international students as an example. Undergraduate courses are mainly lectures, supplemented by seminars, followed by social practice and training. Based on the traditional teaching mode, international students are organized to visit enterprises and research institutes, etc. according to teaching purposes. They can broaden their horizons, consolidate the knowledge learned in class, and stimulate the international students' perception of knowledge. During the holidays, professional teachers will organize student training, and some seminars will be held during the training sessions. The collision and fusion of various ideas can deepen the in-depth understanding of international students' professional knowledge and local culture. In addition, arranging related topics and holding seminars every week can cultivate the ability of international students to discover problems, analyze problems, and think independently and solve problems.

In terms of management and education of international students in China, it advocates "convergent teaching management". That is, the management of international students will be integrated into the education management system of Chinese universities under the premise of respecting the country, religion, culture, and living habits of international students.^[3] Guiding international students to integrate into the new collective, Chinese and international students learning together and making progress together will be a new trend in the education and training model for Chinese students studying abroad.

The training of international students in Chinese universities is still in the development stage. In order to make more students from countries or regions along "the Belt and Road" willing to come to China for higher education and conducive to scientific and technological progress and social and economic development, Chinese universities need to continue to explore new international student curriculum systems.

Optimization of Education and Teaching Mode for International Students

The cultivation of international students should not be confined to the indoctrination of professional knowledge. While focusing on the depth and breadth of the knowledge structure, students should comprehensively cultivate their thinking ability, language ability and core qualities. For "the Belt and Road" initiative, cultivating talents with an international perspective is of far-reaching significance to improve China's national soft power and promote Chinese culture.

International Students' Teaching Mode should be more Diversify: Multimedia Teaching + Case Teaching + Group Discussion Teaching + Inquiry Teaching.

Multimedia teaching. The application of multimedia teaching in the classroom will increase the

students' perceptual knowledge. Teachers can combine the text, pictures and videos in multimedia while explaining, which can improve teaching effectiveness.

Case teaching. In teaching, teachers often need to combine theoretical knowledge and consult relevant cases to enrich the teaching content. This method can increase the in-depth understanding of knowledge of international students, avoiding the monotonous and boring content of the classes, which will affect the enthusiasm of the students, and even cause them to become tired of studying.

Group discussion teaching. Interesting is the best teacher. When international students become interested in a course, they will certainly gain a lot in this course. Group discussion teaching in class is conducive to mobilizing the enthusiasm of international students to take the initiative to learn. This teaching method is not suitable for a large number of undergraduate teaching, but it can be applied to small class teaching with a small number of international students. This teaching method is based on student-centered and teacher-assisted guidance, which can make up for the lack of "teachers speaking and students listening". This way can stimulate the students' spirit of exploring knowledge, so as to achieve the desired effect of training international students^[4].

Inquiry teaching. As international talents, international students should have a complete knowledge system, innovative thinking and exploration spirit. This requires the training unit to provide a teaching environment that can stimulate the development of international students' personality. Teachers guide international students to think deeply through the design of reasonable open topics, thereby improve the analytical ability and innovation ability of international students.

It is not Necessary to Arrange too many Theoretical Courses for International Students. It should be Emphasized that Improving Classroom Efficiency and the Autonomous Learning Ability of International Students, and Promoting the Combination of Theory and Practice: Class Theory Lessons + Experiment Course + Extracurricular Practice Lessons + Seminar + Chinese Culture Class.

Class theory lessons. Establishing professional theoretical courses for international students is the basis for training of international students. In order to allow international students to master the basic principles and basic knowledge of the major, it is necessary for colleges and universities to make reasonable curriculum and credit arrangements to cultivate professional talents with international orientation. In addition, due to the different professional foundations of international students in different countries, a single cultivation plan will increase the difficulty of cultivation. The setting of the training program for theoretical courses should take into account the national or regional differences.

Experiment Course. The training of international students provides experimental courses based on theoretical courses according to the needs of different majors. Through the combination of theory and practice to stimulate international students' interest in majors, deepen understanding of professional knowledge, and master the methods to solve practical problems.

Extracurricular practice lessons. Extracurricular practice classes have not yet been scheduled in the international students training programs of most universities. Extracurricular practice lessons are an extension of classroom teaching. The visits and investigations can help international students understand the current status of Chinese enterprises, economic and social development, and scientific and technological development^[5].

Seminar. For the training of international students, the proportion of seminars should be increased. Teaching in the form of seminars allows international students to integrate into the classroom, enliven the classroom atmosphere and deepen what they have learned and extracurricular knowledge. Teachers can divide international students into groups, arrange 2-3 major related topics that students are interested in each week and assign them to each group. Each international students can consult materials, analyze and solve problems, and publish and discuss research results in the seminar. This kind of seminar is helpful to train the students' problem analysis ability, logical thinking ability and problem solving ability, and deepen the cultivation of teamwork ability.

Chinese Culture Class. The arrangement of Chinese culture courses into the international students' training program is conducive to international students' understanding of China's society,

economy, history and culture. The teaching of Chinese culture course can cultivate the Chinese cultural accomplishment of international students and improve their receptivity to different cultures and ability of objective evaluation.^[6]

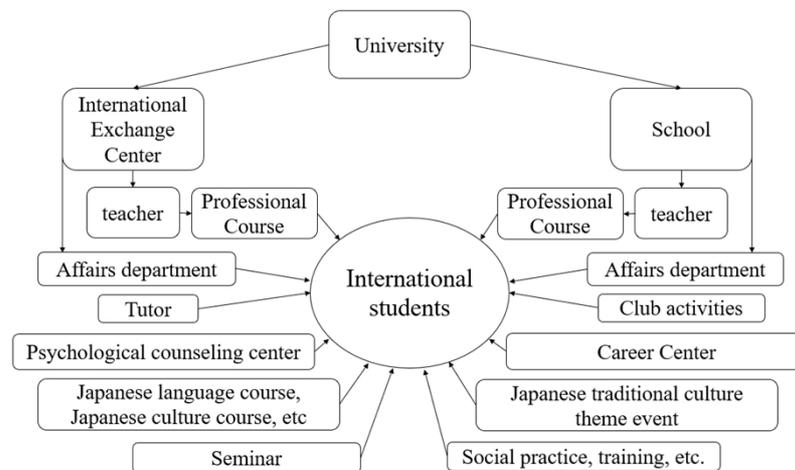


Figure3. Training model of international students in Japan

Conclusions

Promoting the exchange and cooperation of higher education in the countries along "the Belt and Road", and optimizing the training model for international students in China are important ways to realize "the Belt and Road". Chinese colleges and universities have made certain achievements in terms of learning environment and education training model for international students, but they still need further reform, innovation and optimization, all of which need the support of related funds and teachers. In order to expand the international influence of Chinese universities, and at the same time to be in line with international universities, further promote the scale of international students coming to China from countries along "the Belt and Road", Chinese universities are required to continue to explore and have a long way to go.

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