

# A Review of Studies on the Development Dilemma of Vocational Education in Minority Areas\*

Sha Yang

College of Management  
Southwest Minzu University  
Chengdu, China 610000

Chengfang Liu

College of Management  
Southwest Minzu University  
Chengdu, China 610000

**Abstract**—Vocational education in minority areas is an important booster for economic development and personnel training in ethnic minority areas. It is an important component of vocational education in China and has its own unique development process, but it also faces many problems. Many scholars have analyzed the status quo of vocational education in minority areas, and put forward many problems and challenges in its development. At the same time, many development strategies have been proposed. This paper sorts out the research results and puts forward the prospect of the future of minority vocational education.

**Keywords**—minority; vocational education; development dilemma

## I. INTRODUCTION

Since the reform and opening up, the level of vocational education in minority areas has been greatly improved, and the quality and scale of running schools have been greatly improved. Vocational education institutions have been established from primary, intermediate to senior levels, which provide many excellent talents for the economic development and social progress of ethnic minority areas and effectively promote the development of education in ethnic minority areas [1] [2] [3] [4]. However, due to the constraints of economic, geographical location, social environment and historical development, vocational education in minority areas is also facing many problems. Compared with vocational education in other areas, vocational education of ethnic minorities develops slowly, and even can not meet the needs of local social and economic development. It has become a weak link of vocational education in China [5] [6] [7] [8] [9] [10] [11]. How to effectively improve the teaching quality of ethnic minority vocational education, solve the problems and challenges faced by education, realize the coordinated development of vocational education and local social economy, and train more high-quality and high-ability talents for ethnic minority areas, which is an important guarantee to promote the economic development, improve people's living standards and coordinate the society in ethnic minority areas, and is also an important issue to promote the overall and coordinated development of vocational education

personnel training in China [12] [13] [14] [15] [16].

Through consulting a large number of research literature on the current situation of vocational education in minority areas, this paper mainly combs the current situation of vocational education in minority areas, especially the problems and challenges faced, and summarizes the current research situation in all aspects. Finally, some suggestions and prospects are put forward for the development of vocational education.

## II. CURRENT SITUATION OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT IN ETHNIC MINORITY AREAS

Vocational education in minority areas has been concerned by the Party Central Committee and governments at all levels, and many policies and guidelines for construction and development have been issued. In 2010, the CPC Central Committee held a national conference on education, which formulated the Outline of the National Education Reform and Development Plan 2010-2020 [17]. This outline plans and lays out the overall layout of education development in ethnic areas in the next ten years. To comprehensively improve the level of education in ethnic areas, governments at all levels are required to promote the coordinated development of all kinds of education in ethnic areas, vigorously develop bilingual education and counterpart support. At the same time, the Ministry of Education, the National People's Committee and other departments also put forward joint opinions in 2013 [18]. At the same time, the ministry of education, the National People's Committee and other departments also put forward joint opinions in 2013, fully aware of the importance of promoting the cultural heritage and innovation of ethnic vocational colleges, and put forward five effective measures to develop the vocational colleges. Governments at all levels have also introduced development measures, such as Inner Mongolia's proposal that 36,000 pastoral students enjoy free vocational education [19]. The ministry of education of Xinjiang also organized bilingual backbone teachers from vocational colleges to train in Beijing [20], and Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region took the lead in putting forward two rounds of strategies to tackle the key problems of vocational education in the whole country [21].

After the important promotion and layout of minority vocational education from the Party Central Committee to

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the governments at all levels, the development of minority vocational education in China has been greatly promoted. A large number of vocational colleges have sprung up, and the training mode of vocational education from primary to intermediate to advanced has been basically improved in all regions. It has adapted to the development of vocational education in China, provided a large number of high-quality talents for ethnic areas, and effectively promoted the economic and social development of ethnic areas [22]. However, we should also see that there is a big gap between the vocational education level in minority areas and that in developed areas. The quality of teaching and personnel training needs to be further improved. The personnel training of vocational colleges in minority areas can not fully meet the needs of local industries, and there are various problems [23]. Therefore, we should not only see the achievements and progress made in the development of Vocational Education in ethnic minority areas, but also see the problems and challenges, and further adopt various policies and means to promote the rapid and sound development of Vocational Education in ethnic minority areas.

### III. PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN ETHNIC AREAS

Due to the constraints of development history, social economy, educational concepts, transportation and other factors, compared with developed areas, there are many problems and challenges in vocational education in ethnic minority areas. After years of research, Zhang [23] concluded that there are five major problems in ethnic vocational education, including low awareness of education by the masses, unreasonable professional settings, poor conditions for running schools, low overall quality of teachers, poor quality of students' employment, and so on. These five questions really summarize the problems of vocational education in ethnic minority areas, and other scholars also have carried out research and research on these aspects respectively.

#### A. *Low Level of Awareness of Mass Education*

Qian [16] and others pointed out that minorities are generally in remote mountainous areas of agriculture and animal husbandry, the masses are in a long-term farming society, and the economy is generally more difficult, so the importance of vocational education for children is not fully understood. Zhang [24] and others pointed out that in ethnic minority areas, parents generally go out to work, resulting in the widespread phenomenon of Left-behind children. Parents prefer that their children go out to work early and engage in simple labor industries. All these will make it difficult for vocational colleges in minority areas to enroll students, and parents' expectations will affect children's vocational education learning status.

#### B. *Unreasonable Specialty Setting*

The professional settings of vocational colleges in ethnic areas do not match the development of local industries, and the trained professionals cannot fully compete and adapt to industrial skills. Zhang [24] pointed out that the professional

settings of vocational colleges in ethnic areas are not adaptable, lacking national characteristics and local characteristics. Wang [25] believes that the professional settings of vocational colleges in ethnic areas are single, lacking pertinence and regionality. Li [26] pointed out that there are few traditional skills majors (such as modern agricultural technology, national culture, etc.) that are urgently needed, and some relative saturation needs are small. Professional (such as computer) set too much. Qian [5], Yang [27] and others pointed out that the professional setting of vocational colleges in ethnic areas lacks market awareness and is lagging behind, which greatly affects the quality of vocational education.

#### C. *Poor Conditions for Running Schools*

The economy of the ethnic minority areas lags behind the developed regions for a long time. The residents have less income and difficulties in living. The government's fiscal revenue is weak, and the education funds invested in vocational colleges are tight. This will cause the school's hardware facilities to be uneven, and the quality of student training is not high. Wang [25] pointed out that vocational education requires a special school environment and facilities, and the input cost is higher than that of ordinary education. The government will flow most of the funds into general education, resulting in poor vocational education facilities and environment. Zhang [25] found that in 2013, the conditions for the running of vocational colleges in ethnic areas in eight provinces and autonomous regions, such as the per capita construction area and the number of books per student, did not meet the standards set by the Ministry of Education, and the national vocational colleges in Ningxia, Tibet and Sichuan The funds are seriously under-represented. Yang [27] founds that there are only 32 secondary vocational schools in Hunan Xiangxi Autonomous Prefecture, with 13,700 students, accounting for only 34% of the total number of high school students. Since the financing channels of vocational schools rely only on government finances, they cannot introduce foreign capital, resulting in financial constraints. Yang [28] founds through investigation that the funds for higher vocational education in ethnic areas are tenser than basic education. Higher vocational education is difficult to rise. Unless the state has major policy care, the funding problem is an important factor hindering the development of higher vocational education in ethnic areas. Ma [29] pointed out that vocational colleges in ethnic areas lacked funding sources, government support was insufficient, and vocational schools had poor experimental equipment and equipment, which could not meet the normal teaching needs of students in school.

#### D. *Lower Overall Quality of Teachers*

The challenges faced by vocational education in ethnic areas also include the overall quality of teachers. Zhang [23] found that ethnic vocational colleges lacked teachers due to insufficient teacher preparation, while "double-type" teachers accounted for less than 20% of full-time teachers. And the overall quality of teachers is not high. Wang [25] found that some teachers in Sichuan have found that the number of teachers with insufficient undergraduate degree is

30%, and the number of teachers with undergraduate degrees is 50%. The number of teachers with graduate degree is very high. Less, the overall level of education of teachers needs to be improved. Tian [30] conducted a survey on the faculty of the Miao nationality in southeastern Guizhou, and found that the number of full-time teachers in vocational schools is small, the number of part-time teachers is large, and the number of highly educated teachers is low. Summarizing the above phenomena, the professionalization of teachers in ethnic vocational colleges faces five problems: the professional quality of teachers cannot meet the quality requirements of "double-type" teachers, the lack of teacher qualifications, the lack of professional characteristics, the lack of teachers' reflection on teaching and research, training A serious shortage of bases leads to a lack of teacher training channels, lack of strong legal support for school-enterprise cooperation, etc. [31] [32] [33] [34]

#### *E. Poor Quality of Employment for Students*

Zhang [23] pointed out that in ethnic areas, there is a widespread phenomenon of light education and light academic ability. Employers are mainly educated, do not care about the ability of students, and set the threshold of education. At the same time, ethnic areas are mainly agricultural and animal husbandry, the second and third industries are underdeveloped, there are fewer large enterprises, and the demand for labor is small, which will lead to low employment rate of vocational school students. Qian [5] and Yang [35] found that the economic structure of ethnic areas has undergone major adjustments, while the reform of vocational colleges has lagged behind. School graduates cannot adapt to the technical and capacity requirements of the new economic structure, and students are unable to fully employ.

In addition to the problems and challenges faced by vocational education in ethnic minority areas, the more developed areas in ethnic minority areas lag behind, and the locally trained talents tend to be employed in developed areas, resulting in brain drain, which is also a new problem in recent years [24] [36] [37] [38] [39] [40].

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Through the analysis of the current situation of vocational college education in ethnic areas, the problems faced by ethnic vocational education are sorted out. Under the support of relevant policies of relevant state departments, national vocational education, through its own reform and efforts, has improved the quality of education and the benefits of personnel training in recent years. A huge breakthrough was made. However, due to the particularity of the cultural, historical and economic development of the ethnic areas, there are also many problems and challenges, which have always been the weak link of the national vocational education. Many scholars have carried out research, research and demonstration on the problems faced by national vocational education, and put forward many development strategies, which have effectively promoted the development and reform of national vocational education.

However, the author believes that these studies still need to strengthen and attract attention: (1) with the development of modern information and industrial transformation and upgrading, the social development and industrial transformation in ethnic areas have also undergone profound changes, how to improve national vocational education. Adapting to these changes and promoting their own upgrading and transformation is the focus of future research; (2) the current trend of education internationalization is gradually becoming obvious. In addition to learning from the development model of vocational education in developed regions, minority areas need to learn from international advanced vocational education. Development experience, how to better introduce the successful experience of vocational education construction in similar ethnic minority areas abroad is the focus of future research.

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