

Theoretical Logic, Key Issues, and Practical Paths for Empowering Common Prosperity through Higher Education Development

Yanan Chen¹, Yi Peng^{2,*}

¹School of Management, Guangzhou City University of Technology, Guangzhou, 510800, China

²School of Economics, Shenzhen Polytechnic University, Shenzhen, 518055, China

*Corresponding author: 83487059@qq.com

Abstract: Higher education plays an irreplaceable role in cultivating high-quality talents and promoting social common prosperity. By promoting industrial structure optimization, empowering human capital development, and narrowing income gaps, higher education significantly contributes to achieving common prosperity. However, the process of higher education empowering common prosperity still faces key issues such as unequal distribution of educational resources, insufficient alignment with industrial structures, and excessive pursuit of scale expansion. This paper finally proposes policy recommendations to address these issues in higher education development.

Keywords: Higher Education; Common Prosperity; Educational Equity

1. Introduction

Common prosperity, as the core requirement of socialism, aims to achieve social fairness and justice through fair and reasonable distribution mechanisms that allow citizens of all classes to share in the country's and society's developmental achievements, thereby eliminating unfair phenomena. In the process of achieving common prosperity, it is essential to balance economic development efficiency and social equity, emphasize increasing income levels for low-income groups, narrow income gaps, and enhance overall social well-being. Higher education, as an essential component of the basic public service system, plays a crucial role in achieving common prosperity.^[1]

The core of higher education is to build a higher quality, more equitable, and characteristic education system, expand educational resources, and optimize supply to ensure every student has the opportunity to receive high-quality education while establishing a mechanism for shared developmental achievements. The development of higher education promotes individual all-round development and human capital enhancement, fosters industrial upgrading and societal wealth growth, improves supply levels, and increases support capabilities. Although China has essentially eliminated absolute poverty and regional overall poverty, challenges such as relative poverty, the risk of newly out-of-poverty populations falling back into poverty, reducing income disparities, and improving employment conditions remain. Therefore, the development of higher education is crucial for achieving common prosperity.^[2]

As a core driver of social and economic development, higher education significantly impacts the realization of common prosperity for all people. This influence of educational reform and innovation manifests in multiple areas: firstly, through industrial structure upgrading, optimizing industrial layout, and enhancing industrial chain levels to promote high-quality economic development; secondly, by strengthening human resource training and utilization, improving the overall quality of the workforce, which is a key aspect of higher education; additionally, reducing regional development disparities, achieving balanced distribution and effective utilization of resources, promoting regional coordinated development; furthermore, fostering innovation at the core, driving technological advancement and innovation capabilities to provide important pathways for common prosperity; lastly, through institutional development and policy adjustments, promoting social fairness and justice, ensuring developmental achievements benefit all people. In the context of the new era, thoroughly understanding the development patterns of higher education and comprehensively applying these strategies are crucial for promoting China's comprehensive economic and social progress and achieving the goal of common prosperity, thereby laying a solid foundation for building a more equitable and prosperous society.

2. Theoretical Logic of Higher Education Empowering Common Prosperity

The core goal of common prosperity is to coordinate fairness and efficiency, aiming to achieve social fairness and justice, allowing everyone to share in the fruits of economic growth. In the process of achieving common prosperity, it is necessary to balance the relationship between fairness and efficiency, ensuring that economic development can improve overall efficiency while achieving fair resource distribution, leading to sustainable economic development and social common prosperity.

In the course of economic development, it is essential to ensure the fair allocation of resources, allowing everyone to enjoy equal opportunities and rights, thus achieving fair resource distribution. Fair resource allocation promotes social fairness and justice, achieving the goal of common prosperity. Simultaneously, it is necessary to pursue economic efficiency, improving resource utilization efficiency and production efficiency to drive economic growth and development. Enhancing efficiency enables sustainable economic development, providing economic support for common prosperity. A reasonable income distribution mechanism is a crucial guarantee for balancing fairness and efficiency. By adjusting income distribution, wealth can be more fairly distributed among all members of society, promoting social fairness and justice, and achieving the goal of common prosperity.

2.1 Promoting Industrial Structure Optimization to Boost High-Quality Economic Development

Achieving common prosperity requires equitable resource distribution and balanced social development. Optimizing and upgrading industrial structures facilitates rational resource allocation and regional coordinated development, thus promoting social common prosperity. By creating job opportunities, adjusting income distribution, achieving regional coordination, providing social security and public services, driving innovation and technological progress, nurturing talent, and enhancing skills, as well as promoting green and sustainable development, industrial structure optimization can be achieved. This improves economic efficiency and competitiveness, driving high-quality economic development^[3].

Industrial structure upgrading usually implies higher levels of labor productivity, which heavily relies on the supportive role of higher education. The professional knowledge and skills training provided by higher education are conducive to technological innovation and progress, helping to cultivate more talents with innovative spirit and practical abilities, becoming the backbone of societal technological transformation. Meanwhile, through collaborations between higher education institutions, industry, and research institutes, knowledge can be widely disseminated and innovated, promoting the transformation of industries towards higher technology, higher knowledge intensity, and higher added value. In summary, the high-quality development of higher education can facilitate the strengthening of weak links in industries, the extension of advantageous industries, promote the upgrading of traditional industries, establish new chains in emerging industries, enhance the continuity and competitiveness of industrial development, drive the digital transformation of traditional industries and enterprises, elevate the level of modernization, intelligence, and greening of industries, and promote the development of green and low-carbon strategic emerging industries.

2.2 Empowering High-Quality Human Capital Development to Enhance Economic Efficiency

High-quality human capital is crucial for enhancing economic efficiency and development. Improving the quality of human capital can effectively increase productivity, promote innovation, and enhance competitiveness, thus optimizing economic structure, facilitating talent mobility, and disseminating knowledge, ultimately achieving sustainable economic growth and prosperity. High-quality human capital possesses extensive and deep knowledge and skills, enabling more effective handling of complex tasks and challenges, thus improving productivity, reducing resource waste, optimizing production processes, and enhancing the efficiency of enterprises and the overall economy^[4].

Additionally, high-quality human capital typically has creativity and innovation capabilities, driving technological advancements and industrial upgrades, introducing new products, services, and business models, thus promoting economic growth. Enterprises and organizations with high-quality human capital can often gain a competitive edge in the market, better adapt to market changes, provide high-quality products and services, enhance competitiveness, and achieve sustainable development. Furthermore, high-quality human capital helps optimize economic structure, promote industrial upgrading and transformation, transition the economy towards a knowledge-based and innovation-driven economy, thereby improving overall economic efficiency and competitiveness.

Higher education, as the primary provider of advanced knowledge and professional skills, plays a crucial role in human capital development. Higher education offers individuals opportunities for in-depth learning and specialized training, helping them acquire extensive and deep knowledge and skills, enhancing their overall quality and competitiveness, and adapting to changes in the socio-economic environment. Through higher education learning and training, individuals can better meet career development needs, enhance their employment competitiveness, and contribute to technological innovation, cultural heritage, and social management, driving society towards higher development levels. Additionally, higher education promotes social mobility and equity by making higher education more accessible and improving its level, allowing more people to acquire advanced knowledge and skills, achieve social mobility and career advancement, reduce social stratification, and promote inclusive and equitable development.

2.3 Narrowing Income Gaps to Promote Social Equity

The core idea of common prosperity is to ensure that everyone benefits from increased income levels, particularly improving the living standards of low-income groups, ultimately achieving the goals of "no poverty," "no shortage," "no polarization," and "universal harmony." To this end, it is necessary to enhance the wealth-creating abilities of low-income people and expand the size of the middle-income group^[5].

Although China has achieved a comprehensive victory in poverty alleviation and entered a stage of high-quality development, there are still many low-income people, including rural residents, urban unemployed, the disabled, and the elderly. These groups lack higher education and the knowledge, skills, and qualities needed for entrepreneurship and productivity improvement, making it difficult to sustain income growth. To continuously improve the income levels of low-income groups, it is essential to fully develop social human capital. Higher education institutions, as developers of human capital, should link high-quality development with common prosperity, actively providing educational support to low-income groups. Adhering to the people-oriented development concept, innovating educational content and methods, and cultivating multi-level human capital and professional skills can enhance the quality and labor productivity of low-income groups, narrowing human capital and income gaps. Higher education should follow principles of public welfare and inclusivity, focusing on the educational opportunities for children from low-income families, providing them with more training and employment opportunities, enhancing their employability and wealth-creation capabilities.

The principles of common prosperity include continuous growth of social supply, continuous improvement of public services, opportunities for everyone to increase income, expanding the middle-income group, and promoting a more equitable overall social income structure. To achieve common prosperity, it is necessary to innovate and advance structural reforms, build a high-quality higher education system, and ensure that everyone has access to high-quality educational opportunities. By enhancing the wealth-creating abilities of low-income people and expanding the middle-income group, a fairer distribution of wealth can be achieved, reducing social inequality, promoting sustainable economic growth, and ultimately realizing common prosperity.

2.4 Empowering Mental Wealth Growth to Achieve Dual Enrichment of "Pockets" and "Brains"

Higher education can empower students' mental wealth growth, achieving the dual enrichment of "pockets" and "brains," providing strong support for sustainable development of individuals and society. Firstly, higher education cultivates students' comprehensive qualities and critical thinking by offering a rich and diverse curriculum and knowledge system, helping them grow their "brain" wealth. Secondly, higher education enhances students' humanistic qualities and social responsibility through strengthening humanistic education and social responsibility education, enriching their emotional intelligence and social awareness, thus enhancing their "brain" wealth. Thirdly, by fostering innovation spirit and entrepreneurial abilities, higher education stimulates students' creativity and innovation consciousness, promoting the growth of "brain" wealth^[4].

3. Key Issues in Empowering Common Prosperity through Higher Education

Currently, China has achieved significant accomplishments in higher education, including expanded scale and improved quality. The gross enrollment rate in higher education continues to rise, and the increase in quality educational resources supports talent cultivation and social progress. However, in the

process of synergistic development between higher education and common prosperity, we face several challenges.

Firstly, the unequal distribution of educational resources is a pressing issue. There is a significant imbalance in educational resources between urban and rural areas, coastal and inland regions, and developed and underdeveloped areas. Some regions have well-equipped schools, comprehensive teaching facilities, and strong faculty, while other regions suffer from poor conditions, teacher shortages, and inconsistent teaching quality. The disparity in resource allocation is also evident between urban and rural schools, public and private schools. Students from different family backgrounds also face disparities in educational resources, exacerbating educational inequity. The imbalance in resource distribution is further reflected in educational funding, with some regions lacking sufficient investment in education, affecting teaching quality.

Secondly, the alignment between higher education and industrial structure is not yet tight enough. Market demand for talent changes with economic structural adjustments, but there is often a significant gap between the graduates produced by some universities and market needs, leading to imbalances in talent supply and demand. Some fields experience talent shortages, while there is a surplus of graduates in other areas who struggle to find employment. Some universities have outdated academic programs that lag behind industry development needs, with a surplus of traditional disciplines and a shortage of programs related to emerging industries. With rapid technological and industrial development, many emerging fields require interdisciplinary talent, but some universities have a single-disciplinary focus, lacking interdisciplinary programs that foster comprehensive abilities^[5].

Thirdly, the degree of industry-university-research collaboration is insufficient, and it is difficult to translate scientific research results into productivity. Universities and enterprises should establish close cooperative mechanisms to promote deep integration of industry, academia, and research. Through joint research projects, establishment of internship and training bases, and cooperative education models, universities can better align with market needs and cultivate talent that meets industry development demands. Universities can conduct industry research and demand analysis to deeply understand the development trends and demand characteristics of different industries, providing a basis for adjusting academic programs and curriculum content to ensure talent cultivation matches market needs. Finally, enhancing employment cooperation with enterprises expands students' career pathways, providing more internship opportunities and career guidance to help them better adapt to industry demands.

Lastly, there are still issues with education quality in higher education. Some universities excessively pursue scale expansion and economic benefits, leading to prominent issues in teaching quality and curriculum settings. Some universities suffer from insufficient teaching resources, outdated teaching equipment, poor laboratory conditions, varying levels of teacher quality, single teaching methods, outdated curriculum settings, and low teaching quality, resulting in poor learning outcomes for students. Despite significant achievements in higher education, these institutions cannot meet students' actual needs and future development trends, leading to increased difficulty in graduate employment.

It is essential to recognize these challenges and take effective measures to resolve them, promoting the synergistic development of higher education and common prosperity.

4. Practical Paths for Empowering Common Prosperity through Higher Education

To achieve the goal of empowering common prosperity through higher education, it is necessary to explore and practice a path that aligns with national conditions. Based on this, the following recommendations are proposed:

Firstly, it is necessary to establish a diversified higher education system to ensure balanced allocation of higher education resources^[6]. On one hand, the government and educational authorities should develop comprehensive universities, vocational education colleges, technical colleges, and other diverse higher education institutions to meet the educational and training needs of students at different levels and with different demands. On the other hand, the government can promote balanced distribution of educational resources among different regions and schools through policy guidance and funding, increasing investment in central and western regions and rural areas.

Secondly, educational institutions should strengthen the planning and management of higher education resources to ensure balanced allocation. The educational institutions and relevant authorities should integrate university resources, share teaching equipment, laboratories, and libraries to improve resource utilization efficiency and ensure balanced allocation. They should uphold educational equity to

ensure every student has equal access to educational resources and opportunities. The institutions and authorities should provide support to students from poor regions and families through policy inclinations and scholarships, helping them access better educational resources. Additionally, they should establish robust regulatory mechanisms to monitor and evaluate the allocation of higher education resources, promptly identifying and addressing imbalances to ensure balanced distribution.

Thirdly, educational policymakers should promote the universalization and popularization of higher education development. The state should appropriately increase the enrollment scale of higher education to improve coverage, ensuring more students can access higher education. The government and educational authorities should establish comprehensive scholarship and aid systems to provide financial assistance to students from economically disadvantaged families, reducing their financial burden and promoting their access to higher education. They should utilize modern information technology to develop distance education and online education, making learning resources more widespread and convenient, meeting the learning needs of different groups. They should promote the development of vocational education and skills training, improving the quality and level of vocational education to cultivate more technical talents that meet market demands. Additionally, they should develop various types of higher education institutions, including comprehensive universities, vocational colleges, and technical schools, to meet the educational needs of students at different levels and with different demands.

5. Conclusion

Educational authorities and universities should deepen higher education reform, focusing on quality and connotative development. Universities should actively respond to the needs of social and economic development, optimizing curriculum settings and focusing on cultivating students' comprehensive qualities and innovation abilities, aligning courses with industry demands and social development trends. Educational institutions should establish diversified evaluation mechanisms, including student evaluations, teacher evaluations, and social evaluations, to promote teaching quality improvement and teaching effectiveness assessment. They should encourage the exploration of innovative teaching methods and techniques, such as problem-oriented learning and practical teaching, to improve teaching effectiveness and student engagement. Universities should strengthen teacher training and faculty development to enhance teachers' teaching levels and professional competence, promoting the quality improvement of higher education. They should also strengthen scientific research and innovation capabilities, encouraging teachers and students to participate in research projects to enhance university research levels and the conversion of research outcomes. Furthermore, universities should focus on students' holistic development, providing diverse cultivation opportunities and platforms to foster students' innovative spirit, teamwork skills, and social responsibility. Finally, educational authorities and universities should establish a robust quality monitoring system to strengthen the monitoring and evaluation of higher education quality, promptly identifying problems and implementing improvement measures to ensure the quality and connotative development of higher education.

Acknowledgement

2023 Guangdong Provincial Education Science Planning Project (Higher Education Special) "Research on the Mechanism of Higher Education Empowering the Achievement of Common Prosperity from the Perspective of Industrial Structure Upgrading" (2023GXJK634)

Shenzhen Polytechnic University Quality Engineering Education Teaching Research Project "Research on project-based teaching design and practice of Python programming in higher vocational finance and economics majors".Guangdong Province Quality Engineering Vocational Education Teaching Reform Research and Practice Project"Research on the Development and Practice of Program Design Courses for Higher Vocational Finance and Economics Majors Based on Computational Thinking Cultivation in case of Application of Python in Finance" in 2023

References

- [1] Huang Bin, Li Bo, Fang Chao. *The Unique Role of Education in Promoting Common Prosperity: Theoretical Should-Be and Empirical Reality* [J]. *Journal of East China Normal University (Educational Science Edition)*, 2023, 41(10): 12-26. DOI:10.16382/j.cnki.1000-5560.2023.10.002.
- [2] Chen Jiawei, Zhang Wenlan. *The Essential Connotations, Logical Mechanisms, and Practical Paths*

of Promoting Common Prosperity through Education in the New Era[J]. *Education Review*, 2024(02): 56-61.

[3] Hou Guanyu, Zhang Zhenyu. *Theoretical Logic, Key Issues, and Practical Paths of Empowering Common Prosperity with New Productivity*[J/OL]. *Journal of Yunnan University for Nationalities (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition)*: 1-8 [2024-04-29]. <https://doi.org/10.13727/j.cnki.53-1191/c.20240422.006>.

[4] Zhu Li, Yang Xiaowei. *Education Promoting Common Prosperity: Premises, Limitations, and Paths* [J]. *Education Development Research*, 2024, 44(01): 27-33+57. DOI:10.14121/j.cnki.1008-3855.2024.01.005.

[5] Zhang Jiping, Dong Zefang. *Five Focus Points for High-Quality Development of Higher Education Empowering Common Prosperity*[J]. *Research in Higher Engineering Education*, 2024(01): 118-123.

[6] Zhang Yingqiang. *Promoting Common Prosperity through Educational Justice: Vocational Education Reform Empowering Disadvantaged Groups Towards Common Prosperity*[J]. *Education Development Research*, 2022, 42(Z1): 1-8. DOI:10.14121/j.cnki.1008-3855.2022.z1.002.