

A Meaningful Experiment in Industry-School Partnership in Vocational Education

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“From a young age I had a real sense of the world of work. This is what vocational education gives you.”

—Steph McGovern

Abstract: *Worldwide, vocational education with an emphasis on industry has gained popularity. China’s rapid industrial change creates a demand for individuals with a breadth of skills rather than a tight focus on a single expertise. Vocational education equips students with practical knowledge, skills, and abilities, which helps business gain from timely collaboration between industry and academia.*

Keywords: *Vocational Education, Skill Training, Education, Business*



INDUSTRY-school collaboration has become a critical component of China's vocational education reform in light of the shift in socioeconomic development mode and the transformation of industrial structure. Foster (1992) argues that vocational educators' primary focus should be the job opportunities and development prospects of trainees in the labor market, and that the development of vocational and technical education should be based on genuine labor market needs. This concept has developed into a consensus among researchers regarding the role of vocational education and has been widely cited by them. The importance of enterprise-school collaboration is well reflected in several countries' vocational education reform programs, such as Germany's Dual System of Vocational Training, Canada's Cooperative Education method, and Korea's Contractual System (Chen, 2014).

Vocational education focused on industry has become popular throughout the world. Due to the influence of subject-based general education, most vocational colleges and schools used to place an emphasis on the uniqueness and completeness of each specialty when developing school curricula, ignoring the connections between different specialties. This resulted in excessive segmentation of student learning and a lack of alignment between school specialty planning and industrial demands for human resources. However, China's ongoing industrial transformation and upgrading creates a demand for multi-skilled people rather than those with a narrow focus on a particular technique. The schools that are best able to adapt their vocational education to industrial development and have a flexible and open framework for specialty planning will attract additional resources to sustain their continued development. Similarly, businesses that engage in timely industry-school collaboration have an advantage in hiring high-quality skilled individuals. The increased efficiency and technological innovation brought about by the latter will enable businesses to maximize their revenues. Thus, by integrating specialist construction and regional industry development, vocational colleges and schools may better serve the community by providing skilled human resources and assisting in the optimization of the local industrial structure.

The purpose of vocational education is to equip students with application-oriented knowledge, skills, and talents. The primary focus of vocational education is on practical training, with the goal of supplying the workforce with highly trained and well-rounded workers. Enterprise-school cooperation maximizes the strengths of both firms and schools in developing instructional strategies and materials, thereby facilitating the relationship between industry and vocational education. Longgang No.2 Vocational and Technical School of Shenzhen have extensive experience collaborating with businesses. The school arranges off-campus training for students at local ICT companies, and the companies also send professional training teams to the school to develop appropriate training plans based on current industry demand. The Coordinated Development of Secondary Vocational School Specialty Clusters and Industry Clusters: A Case Study of Longgang No.2 Vocational and Technical School of Shenzhen in this issue examines the mechanism for coordinating the construction of specialty clusters and the development of industry clus-

ters, drawing on the school's experience in configuring specialty clusters to meet the needs of industrial chains, with the goal of providing useful guidelines for school-enterprise collaboration in specialty planning (Wang & Huang, 2022).

References

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